BERSERK

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29

三浦建太郎 KENTARO MIURA

ベルセルク

BERSERK ㉙

BY
KENTARO MIURA
三浦建太郎

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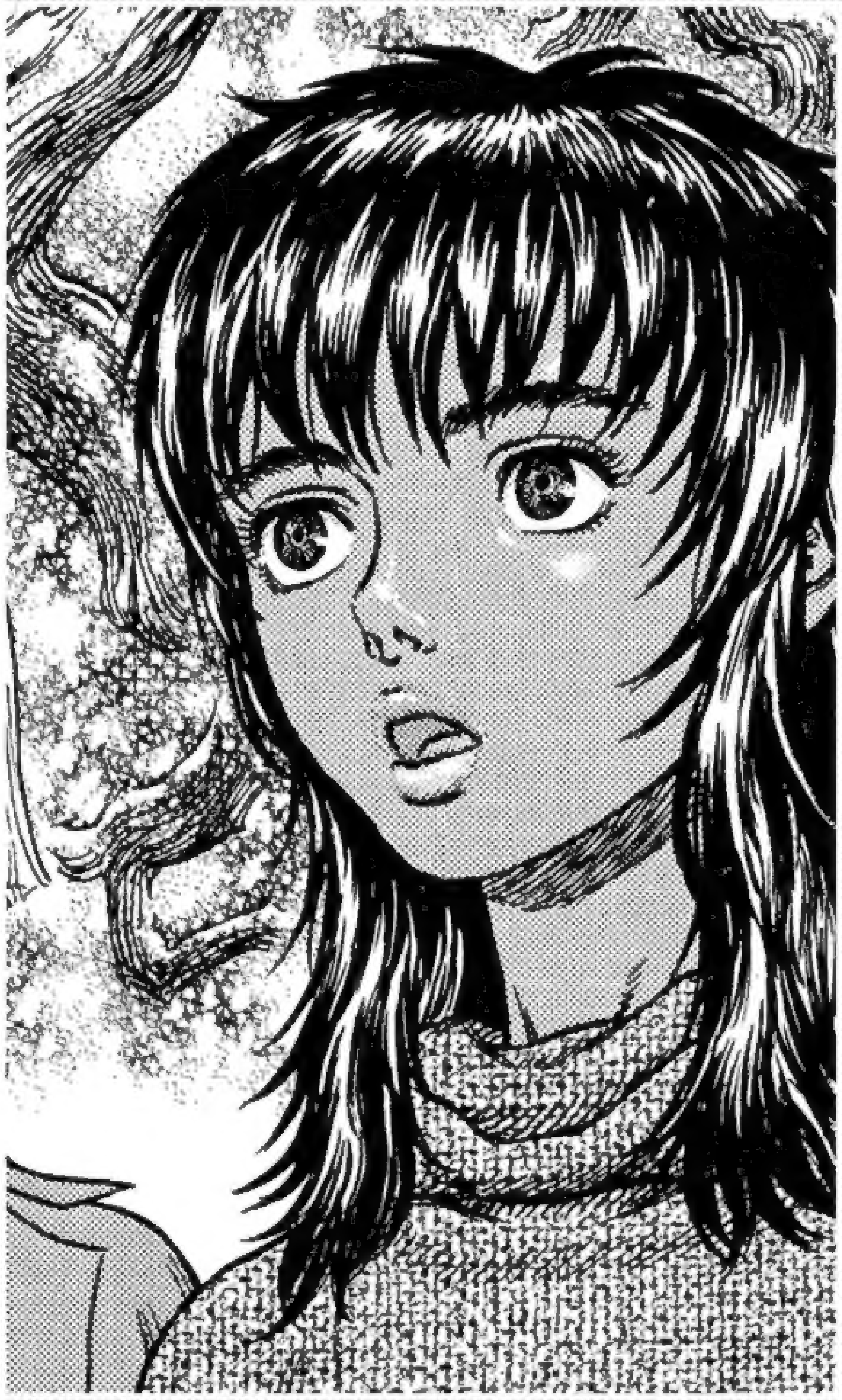
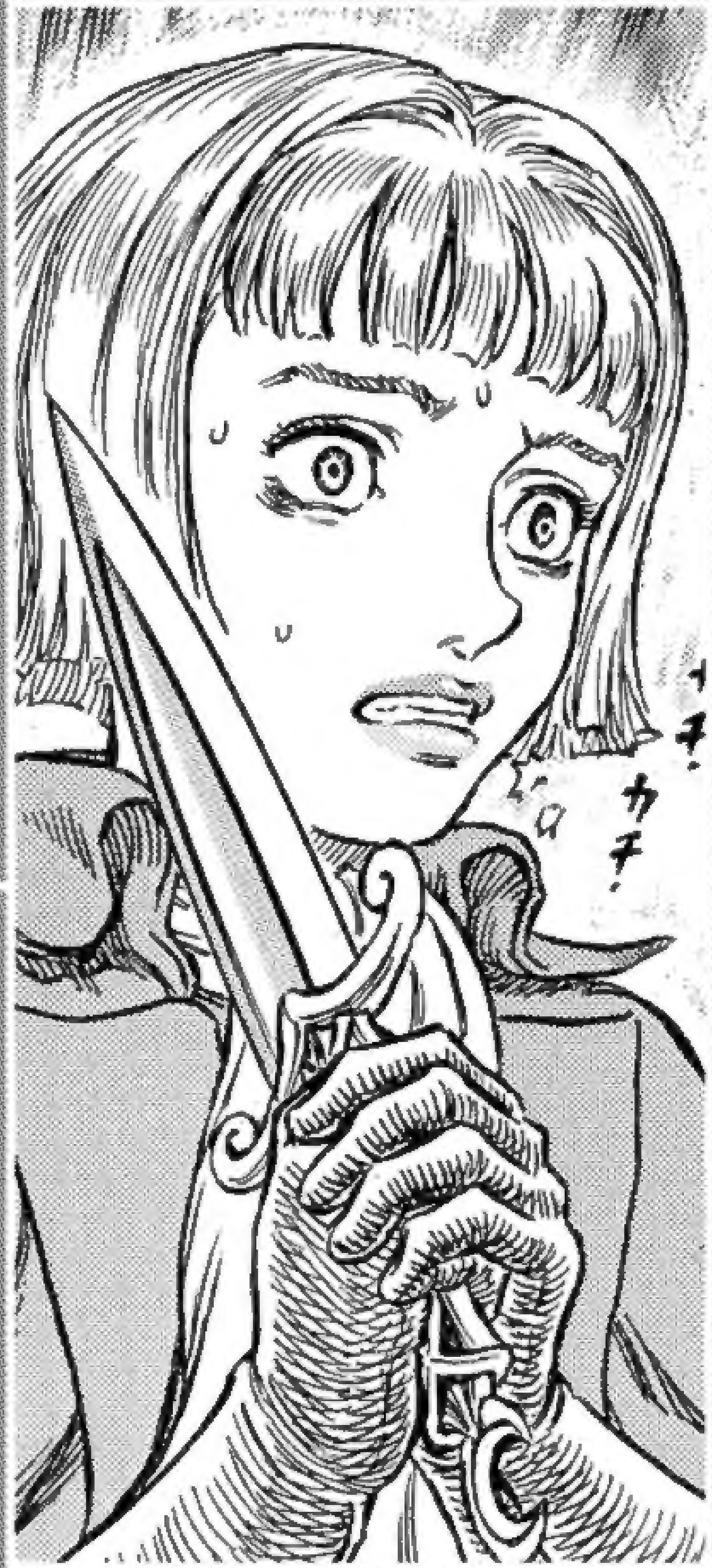
三浦建太郎



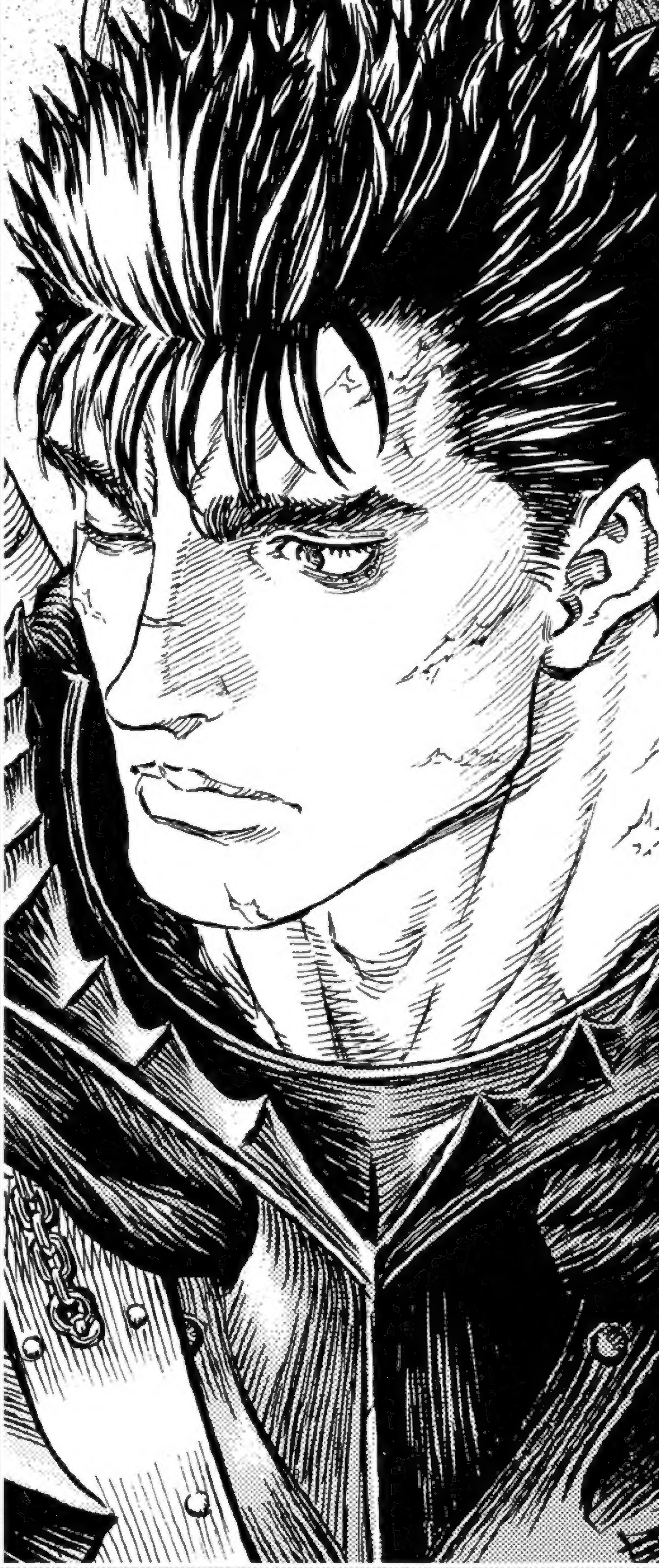
キャスカ Casca

Former unit commander of the Band of the Hawk—mentally regressed from her experience in the Eclipse. She now neither speaks nor conveys any feelings. Her Brand, which reacts to evil, is thinly shielded by Flora's talisman.



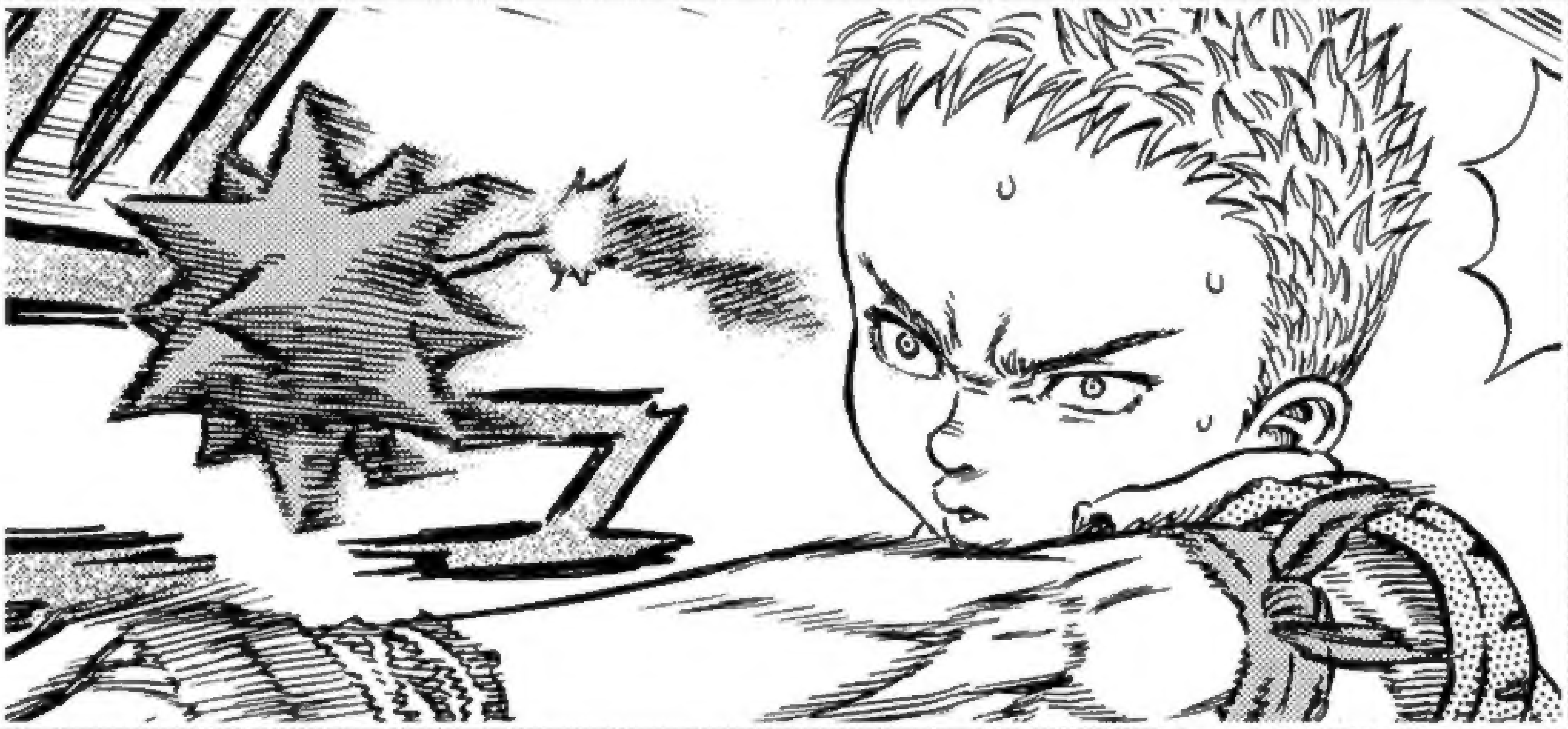
ファルネーゼ Farnese

Former commander of the Holy See's Holy Iron Chain Knights and daughter of the Vandimion family, one of influential status and wealth in the religious sphere. She seeks to learn from Guts her own means of survival and about the reality of the world.



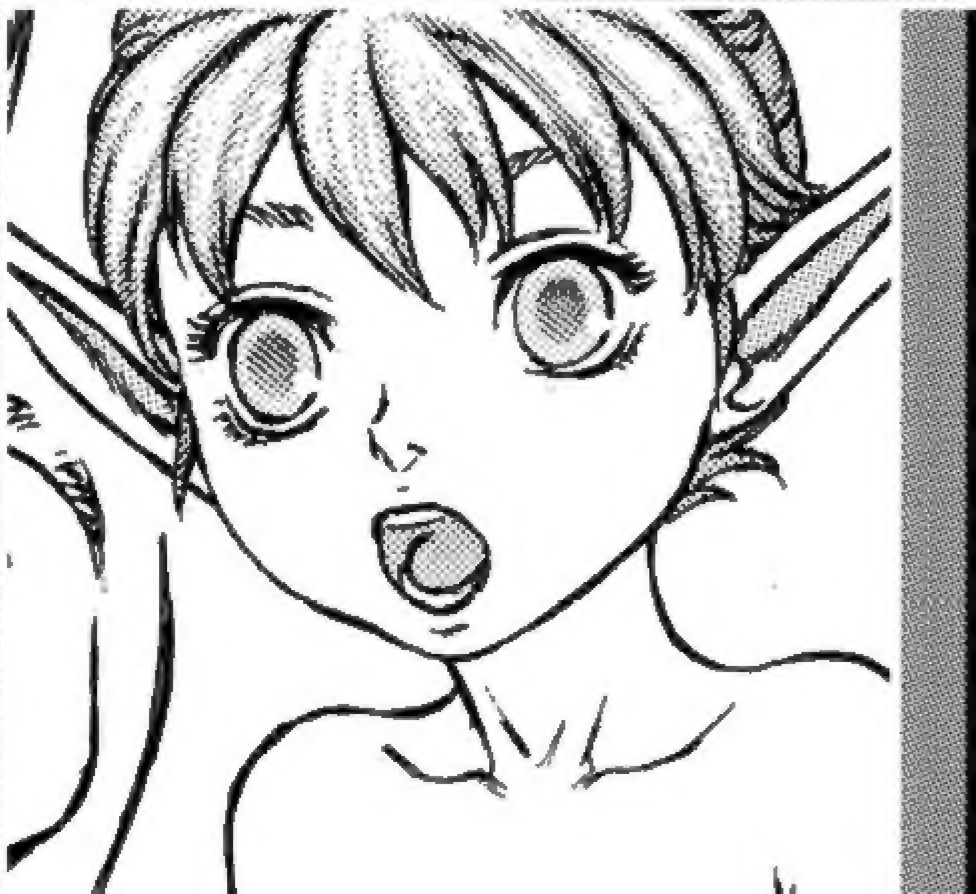
ガッツ Guts

The Black Swordsman. He exists in the Interstice and wears the Berserker Armor, his soul constantly torn between protecting Casca and challenging Griffith. That struggle is nothing short of sublime.



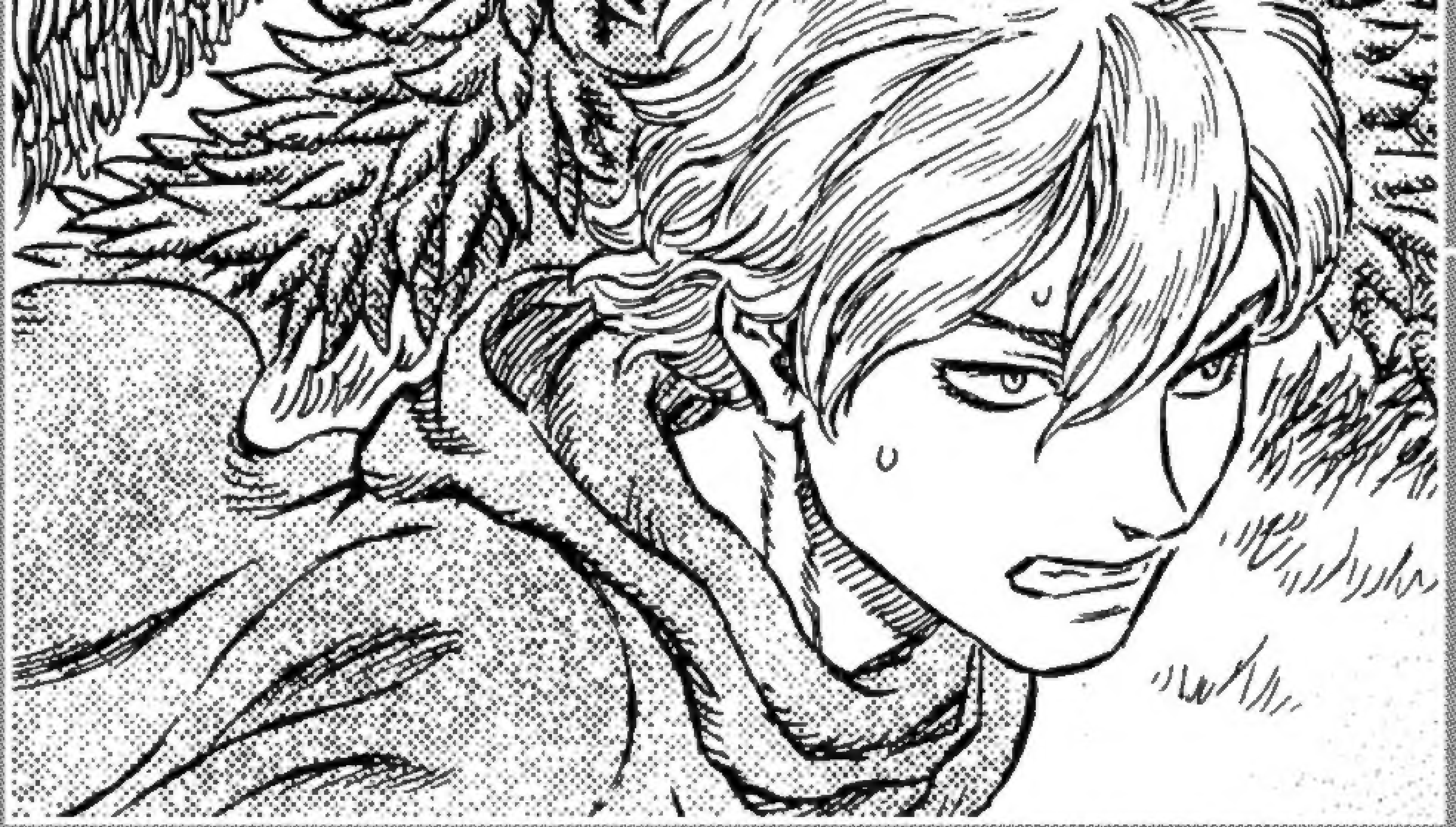
イシドロ Isidro

Dreams of being the "ultimate swordsman," but his actual talent, not up to snuff, repeatedly endangers him. Nevertheless, the boy endeavors toward his dream. He is currently equipped with a fetish granted the protection of fire elementals.



パック Puck

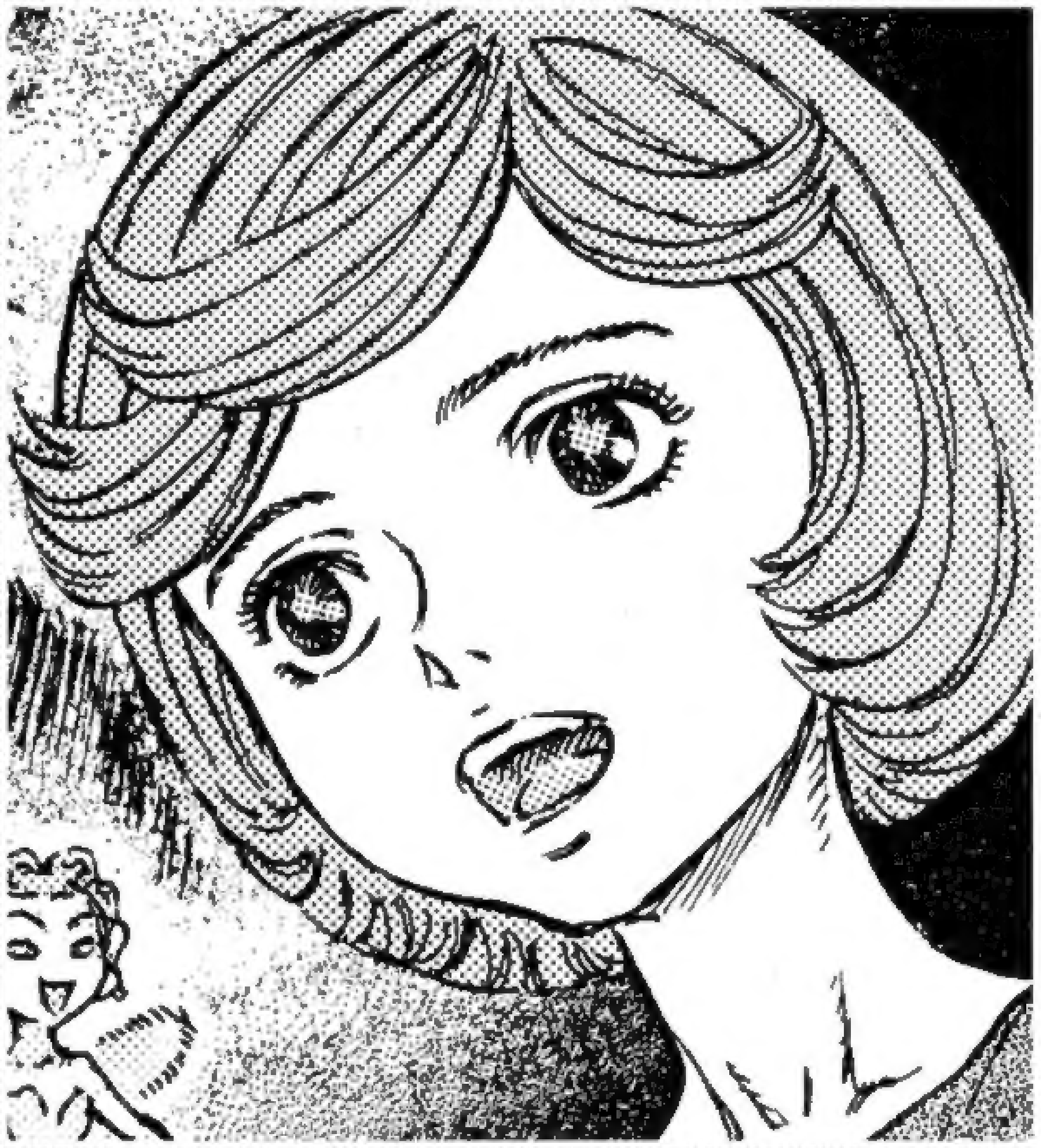
An elf who's long been with Guts on his journeys. His dust has the power to heal wounds. Also, he recently confirmed that he's a wind spirit, one of the four types of elementals. He also changes into "chestnut Puck."



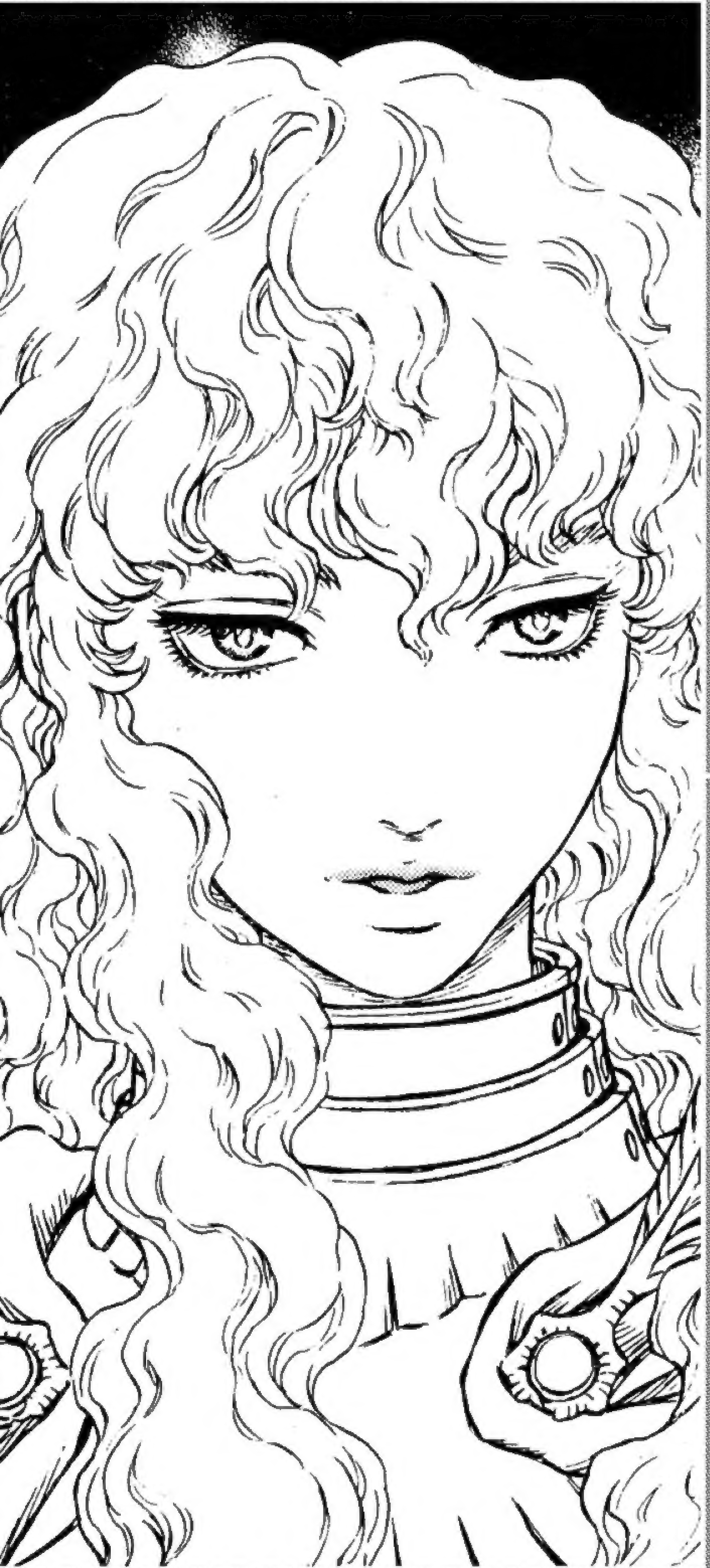
セルピコ Serpico

Attendant of Farnese, and actually her brother; however, Farnese is not aware of the blood relationship. He is skilled in fighting and is currently clad in a fetish granted the protection of wind elementals.

シールケ Schierke

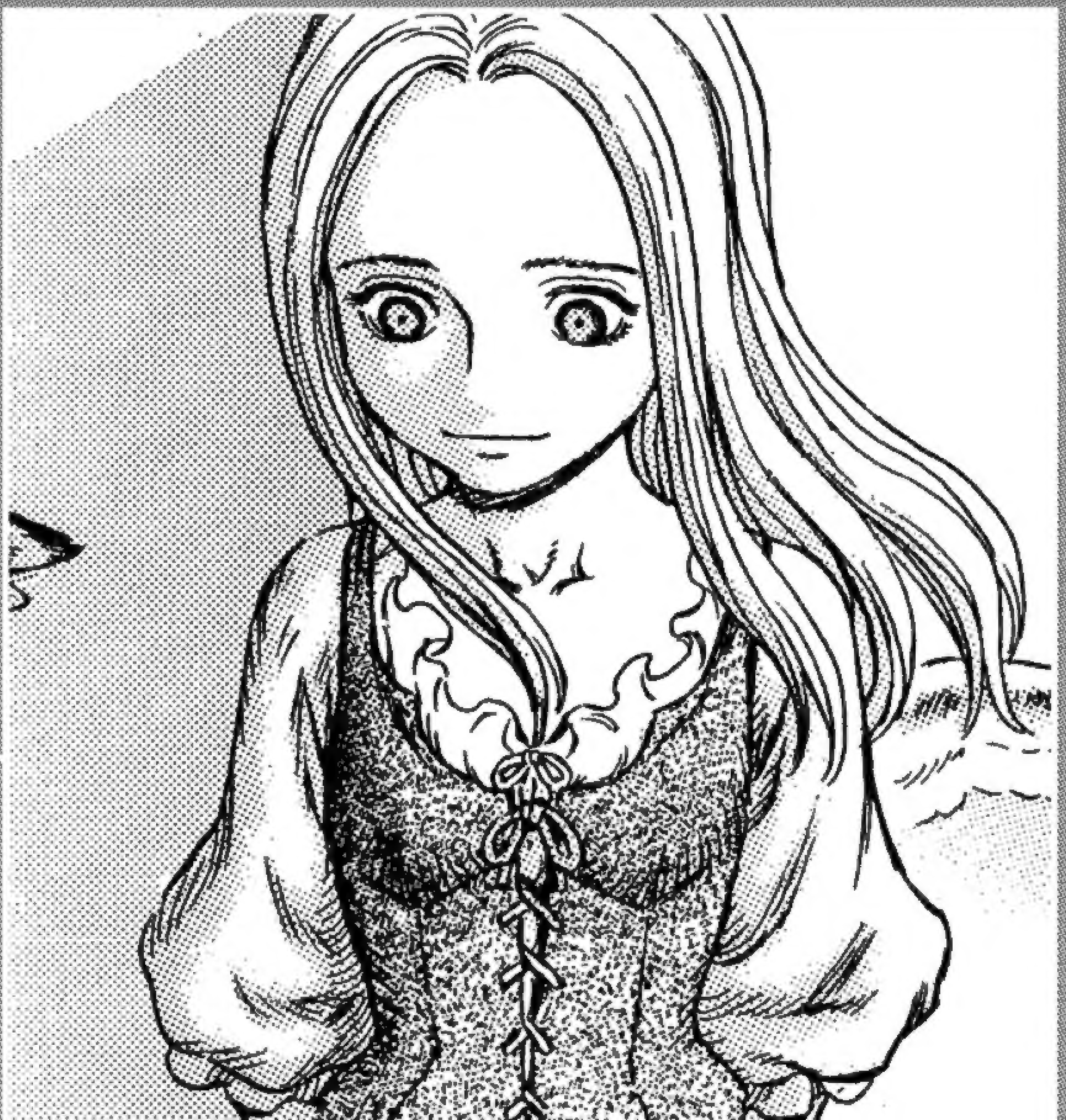


Disciple of Flora, witch of the Spirit Tree mansion. Schierke supports Guts and the others through her use of magic; however, among her spells are some beyond her mastery, which occasionally place her in great peril as she tries to aid her allies. She has a stilted side to her personality.



グリフィス Griffith

Through the Eclipse of the Crimson Behelit, Griffith was reborn as Femto of the Godhand. Later he was incarnated in the imitation Eclipse catalyzed by the egg-shaped apostle, thus returning to the physical world, in which he became the "absolute," without equal. He leads the reborn Band of the Hawk.



ソーニャ Sonia

Sonia was taken prisoner during a Kushan invasion of her city, but was then rescued by Griffith. Due to her abilities, she is now the medium of the reborn Band of the Hawk. She has a free and unbridled personality, but also a showy, courageous side.

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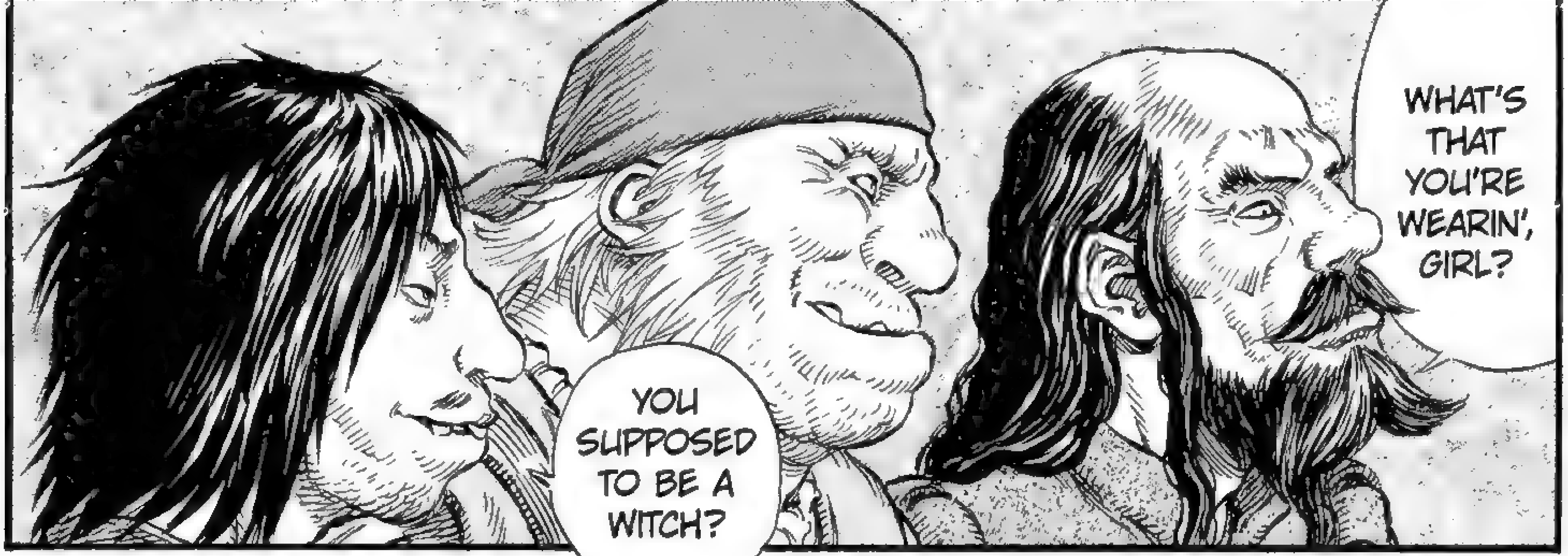
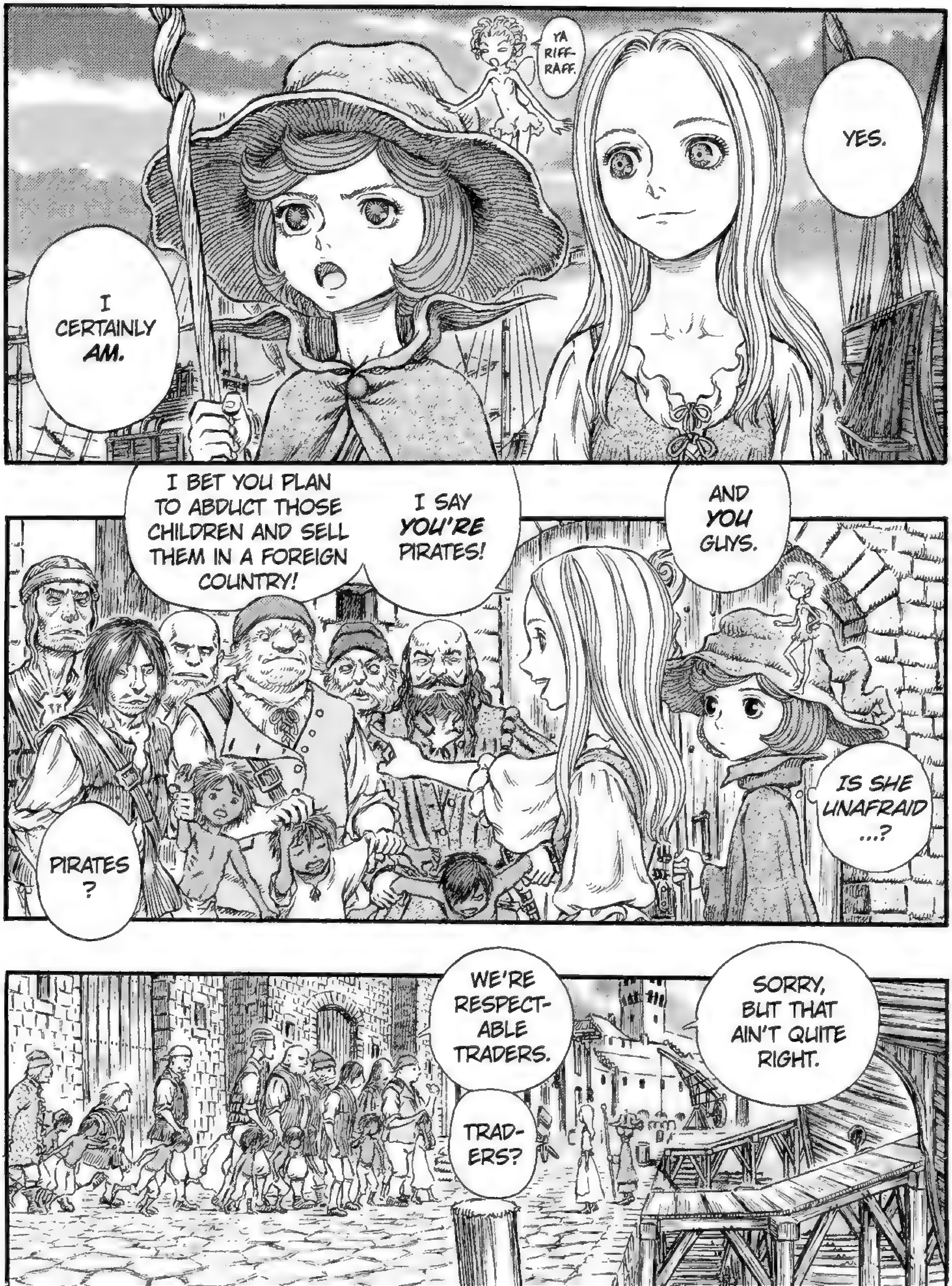

WHAT'S THAT YOU'RE WEARIN', GIRL?
YOU SUPPOSED TO BE A WITCH?

BLOODSHED

刃傷


YES.
YA RIFF-RAFF.
I CERTAINLY *AM.*
AND *YOU* GUYS.
I SAY *YOU'RE* PIRATES!
I BET YOU PLAN TO ABDUCT THOSE CHILDREN AND SELL THEM IN A FOREIGN COUNTRY!
IS SHE UNAFRAID ...?
PIRATES ?
SORRY, BUT THAT AIN'T QUITE RIGHT.
WE'RE RESPECTABLE TRADERS.
TRADERS?

WE'RE IN THE *SLAVE TRADE.*
WE MAKE OUR LIVIN' BUYIN' AND SELLIN' PEOPLE.
SLAVE TRADE...
I KNEW IT! YOU'RE NO DIFFERENT THAN PIRATES.
DON'T LUMP US IN WITH *THEM.* *WE'VE* GOT AUTHORIZATION FROM THE GOVERNMENT.
THESE KIDS...
...ARE *GOODS* WE BOUGHT LEGITIMATELY FROM THIS TOWN'S MERCHANTS.
RIGHT NOW, KUSHAN ARE CONTRABAND IN VRITANNIS, EVEN AS SLAVES. THEY GET ROUNDED UP BY OFFICIALS AND HANGED.
THESE KIDS' PARENTS GOT HANGED AS SUCH, AND NOW HERE THEY ARE.
LOOKS LIKE EVEN *THIS* VRITANNIS LOT COULDN'T STOMACH LAYIN' HANDS ON CHILDREN.
BUT IT AIN'T LIKE THEY CAN BE LEFT IN THE CITY NEITHER.
SO THAT'S WHERE *WE* COME IN.

THEY AIN'T NO USE AS OARSMEN IN A GALLEY SHIP... BUT HELL, WE'LL PROBABLY GET A HIGH PRICE FOR 'EM IN SOME COLONY TOWN DOWN SOUTH.
IT'LL MEAN MONEY IN OUR POCKETS.
OH, BROTHER.
MAYBE THIS PLACE BURNING DOWN'S **NOT** SUCH A BAD IDEA...
?
I AM A WITCH, SO I COULDN'T CARE LESS...
...ABOUT CITY LAWS AND TRADER RATIONALE.
LITTLE HARPY!!
KEEP MOUTHIN' OFF AGAINST GROWNUPS, AND WE'LL SELL **YOU** OFF, TOO!!
TAKE 'EM OUT!

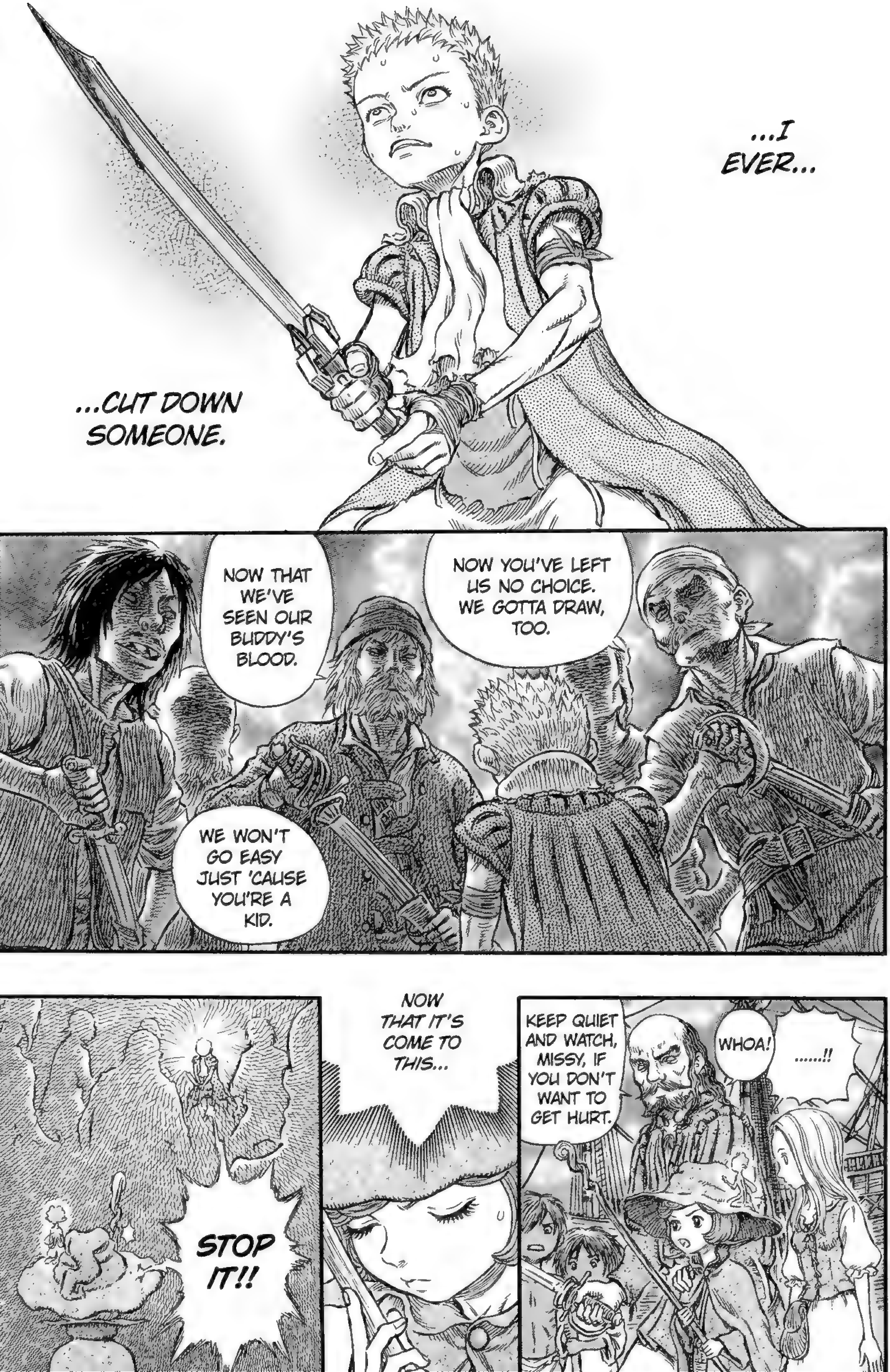
*TOK
ポコ。
...HN?
WHA...?
HEY, WHAT'S WRONG?
I... I CAN'T MOVE.
DON'T BE STUPID.
NO NEED TO ROLL WITH SOME KID'S JOKE.
WHEEEE!! THAT'S GREAT!! MAGIC?! WAS THAT MAGIC?!
NATCH. ♡
わ *WHOA
J-JUST SUGGESTION.
H-HARPY GIRL!! WHAT'D YOU DO?!
*FX: HNNGH
B-BETTER LET ME MOVE, OR I'LL BEAT YOU UP!!
THIS GUY'S A MORON.
YOU SHOULD'VE FROZEN HIS MOUTH, TOO.

*WHRRRL
SET ME FREE IF YOU DON'T WANNA GET HU--
URRK!
*KLONK
WHAT THE-- ?!
?!
*FX: WHUMP
*HAHHH HAHHH
YEAHHH, I WAS *EXPECTIN'* THIS.
BINGO.
ISIDRO.
OH.
IS HE BY ANY CHANCE...
N-NO, HE IS NOT.
NAH, NAH.
HE'S JUST A MONKEY.

HEY! YOU! PIRATES!
QUIT BREAKIN' THE LAW!
WHO'RE YOU?
I'M WITH MUSHROOM GIRL OVER THERE.
...
I CAN'T SEE A BUNCHA PIRATES GATHERIN' UP ALL THESE KIDS FOR SOME PICNIC AT SEA! AGHH! WHAT A DISGRACE!
WHAT'D YOU SAY, KID?!
IF YOU'RE PIRATES, YOU SHOULD BE KIDNAPPIN' GIRLIES WHO'RE MORE LIKE, Y'KNOW, BOMP ZHOOP BOMM!!
BOMP ZHOOP BOMM
CHESTNUT
THAT'S WHAT THEY CALL A TREASURE CHEST... PIRATE BOOTY!!
YOU GUYS'RE JUST GROSS!
HE REALLY IS LIKE A MONKEY.
PRETTY MUCH
DAHAHA...! DAMN, THE MOUTH ON THIS KID!
...
WHO CARES...
...ngh
*HNNGH
...WHAT YOU THINK?
OH, HE'S STILL ALIVE

Y'LITTLE SONUVA BITCH!!
DON'T YOU MESS AROUND WITH GROWNUPS!!
'CAUSE YOU'RE SO MATURE.
*SHAPP
HEENGN!!

OH.
I DIDN'T EVEN THINK ABOUT IT...
ISIDRO ...!!
WELL
HE CAN DO A LITTLE
NOT BAD!
THE MOOD'S CHANGED.
IGHH... BLEEDIN'... ARTERY... !!
*GULP
ゴクッ
THAT'S THE FIRST TIME...


...I EVER...
...CUT DOWN SOMEONE.
NOW YOU'VE LEFT US NO CHOICE. WE GOTTA DRAW, TOO.
NOW THAT WE'VE SEEN OUR BUDDY'S BLOOD.
WE WON'T GO EASY JUST 'CAUSE YOU'RE A KID.
......!!
WHOA!
KEEP QUIET AND WATCH, MISSY, IF YOU DON'T WANT TO GET HURT.
NOW THAT IT'S COME TO THIS...
STOP IT!!

DON'T YOU USE THAT!!
COME NOW...
WHAT ARE YOU SO ANGRY ABOUT?!
THAT'S NOT IT.
HE'S TRYING TO HIDE YOUR TRUE COLORS.
HE'S JUST STUBBORN.
*LUNGE
HE'S HEROIC, ISN'T HE? ♡
YOU LITTLE...
!
GO FOR IT, MONKEY BOY!!
SHE CAN HEAR THE THOUGHT TRANSFERENCE...?!

*FX: THOCK
QUIT SNEAKIN' AROUND ...!!
*FX: JUMP
*SHLAK
*FX: ZHA
EEE, BLOOD...!! HE GOT AN ARTERY ...!!
GET BACK HERE!
GODDAMN BARREL'S IN THE WAY!
*SHNNK
HYOWW!
Y'LITTLE ...!

UH-UH!
YOU AIN'T GETTIN' AWAY!!
CLOSE YOUR EYES!!
PUCK SPAAARK!
*FX: FLASH
*FX: CHOSH
*FX: FLSHH
ZUPUCK!
WOW, WOW!! AGAINST GROWN-UPS, EVEN!!
EXCELLENT COMBO!
WELL...
...WHEN THEY'RE ON A ROLL, AT LEAST.
BUT AT THIS RATE, THEY WILL EVENTUALLY CATCH HIM...
LITTLE SHIT...!

....
ALAS, EVERY INN MUST BE FULL.
GUTS ?
THAT'S FAR ENOUGH, SON!
KID, YOU'VE CAUSED A LOT OF TROUBLE!
*ZHA
*FX: HAHHH HAHHH
THROW DOWN YOUR SWORD, AND WE'LL AT LEAST SPARE YOUR LIFE.
WE'LL BEAT YOU HALF TO DEATH, HANG YOU FROM THE MAST FOR A DAY, THEN CALL IT EVEN.
*TWITCH
COUNTER-ATTACK WHEN THEY FLINCH FROM THE PUCK SPARK!
*CLOP
*BDADUMP BDADUMP

*HRRRRHRHRN
?!
WHAT THE...?!
YOU'RE THAT GUY FROM--
YOU MUST'VE FOLLOWED ME!!
WHO'RE YOU, PAL?!
BUTT OUT OR YOU'LL REGRET IT!!
*BHHRSH

HI THERRRE.
ハー…
......
DO YOU KNOW HIM?
DON'T TELL ME HE'S THE HAWK!
NAH, NAH.
HE'S MY WATCH-DOG.
LET'S SEE...
"THE DUCK KNIGHT."
...OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT, I GUESS?
AGAIN WITH HER NONSENSE.
YOU.

*FX: HAHHH

LOOKS LIKE MY COMPANION'S IN YOUR CARE.
I'LL LEND YOU A HAND.
*SHNNK
...?
OHH?! YOU WANT A FIGHT?! DAMMIT, THIS'S WHY KIDS'RE SO--
HEY!
NOBODY ASKED YOU!!
WHOSE PUPIL BE HE?
*HYNN
!
*CHK
*BDADUMP

*BDADUMP
*SHNNK
*FX: VSSHHHH
M-MY ARM...!! MY ARRRM...!!
*TWITCH
HE...!!
NOT BAD.
*CHSSH

HE FRIGGIN'...
...SLEW WITHOUT HESITATION!!
DROPEY...
I WON'T...
*FX: SQUEEZE
I WON'T...
...BE SCARED!!
おらあああ
*RAHHH
*ZHHF
*FLASH
*CHINNNG

ガッ
*CHA
ガッ
*WHACK
ガシャアアア
*GSHANNNG

THIS IS WHY I HATE KIDS.
TAK
THEY DON'T KNOW THEIR PLACE WHEN DEALIN' WITH ADULTS.
BOSS MAN!
I SAY PIRATE!
A PICTURE-PERFECT ONE...

武者
WARRIOR

HAH HAH HAH
LOOK HERE, YOU LOT.
THERE'S *SOLEMN RULES* WHEN IT COMES TO ADULT SOCIETY.
EVEN ACTIN' OUTTA SOME SENSE OF JUSTICE, IF YOU TRAMPLE 'EM, THAT DEMANDS A BIT OF PUNISHMENT.
TEACHIN' CHILDREN *MANNERS* IS WE ADULTS' RESPONSIBILITY, AFTER ALL.
P-PLEASE, BOSS MAN!!!
KILL THOSE BRATS ...!!
EEEEE!

*FX: HAH HAH HAH

*FX: GRAB

HUHH ?!
COME AGAIN?!
C-CAPTAIN...! CAPTAAAIN!!!
*BITE BITE
*SHRRRIP SHRRRIP
RIGHT, THAT'S BETTER.
......!!
*FX: TOSS
WE'VE COME CLEAN NOW.
WE'VE TAKEN UP A BUSINESS THAT LETS US LOOK SOCIETY IN THE EYE.
YOU LACK CHARACTER REFINEMENT, GENTS.
WELL, DAMN! HERE I THOUGHT PIRATES WOULD HAVE MORE BACKBONE.
*FX: INCH
HE'S JUST BONY.
*FX: KRIK KRIK
SHATTERS MY ILLU--
*DASH

*CHIINNNG
AH!
JERK!
HE JUST JUMPED IN...
GOOOO! WIN, AND GET PROMOTED FROM DOMESTIC TO WILD DUCK!
HEY! KEEP STILL, YOU!
*CLANNG
*GLANG
*JING
*KLONG
YOU'RE OF QUITE THE STOCK.
THE ORTHODOX ARISTOCRAT SCHOOL OF FIGHTING.
YOU SEEM TO HAVE QUITE SOME EXPERIENCE, FOR YOUR AGE.

BUT...
*THMP
WAIT ...!
*SWAYYY
HAVE YOU ANY EXPERIENCE CROSSING SWORDS ON FOOTING AS UNSTABLE AS *THIS?*
......!!

*FX: BLASH

*FX: TMP

*CRAK
*KEENG
LOOK OUT.
*STOMP
グラ
*FX: TOTTER
*GAJINNNG
*FX: BLOOSH
ボチャ
*THUDDD
*POINT
ピタッ

THAT WOULD BE THE EXPERIENCE GAP. YOU MUSTN'T GO AROUND TAUNTING ADULTS, M'LAD.
NOW THEN, HOW SHALL WE GO ABOUT SETTLING THIS?
YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'RE OF NOBLE BIRTH. MAYBE I CAN GET A RANSOM FROM YOUR RELATIVES...
WITH THEM GRACEFUL FEATURES...
...YOU'D PROBABLY FETCH A FINE PRICE, SOLD AS A MALE PROSTITUTE TO A KUSHAN HAREM.
......!!
*CLANNNG

THE STAR TAKES THE STAGE! YOU STAY BACK, BIT PART!
*VYNN
*KLINNG
HE'S ...!
YEAH!
YEAH!
YEAHHH!
HOO...! YOU CAN KEEP UP WITH ME ON BOATS.
*JING
*CLANG
'COURSE I CAN! EVERY TIME I ROLL I'M SWINGIN' A SWORD!
I CAN FIGHT YOU FROM ANY STANCE!
STILL... THIS GUY'S GOOD FOR ONLY HAVIN' ONE LEG!
HOLD!

IT STILL NEEDS WORK, BUT WITH YOUR FIGHTING STYLE YOU'D MAKE A FINE PIRATE.
SO, CARE TO WORK FOR ME? I'LL TRAIN YOU PERSONALLY.
SHOVE IT UP YOUR ASS! WHAT HAPPENED TO COMIN' CLEAN?!
Y'KNOW, YOU'RE RIGHT.
WE SURE HAVE...
GUESS THAT'S AN OLD HABIT OF...
*CHIK
...MINE!
*VYNN

*VPP
*ZHFAAA
SON OF A...!
BUT... WELL...
...THIS IS HOW *ADULTS* DO THINGS, LAD.
YOU'RE TERRIBLE LIVELY ENOUGH...
...BUT YOUR SWORDPLAY'S THAT OF AN INEXPERIENCED WHELP.
THERE'S A THIRST FOR BLOOD IN SWORDPLAY THAT SAYS YOU WANT YOUR OPPONENT'S LIFE...
...AND YOURS AIN'T GOT IT.
NOW, ENOUGH PLAYTIME.
YOU DOGS! TIE THEM ALL UP!
Y... YESSIR!
OHHH, SO CLOSE. THE WILD DUCK WILL JUST HAVE TO WAIT.
JUST A USELESS LITTLE KID AFTER ALL.
NO STRUGGLIN', NOW.

NOW, GO SHOW 'EM HOW IT'S DONE.
AS I SUSPECTED...
...I'LL HAVE TO...
OH.
WAIT.
LOOKS LIKE WE'RE OKAY.
...YEAH.
*ZUPUCK
SHALL I SPARK 'EM?
!
HEAVY...
WITHDRAWWW.
*FWMP
*GRAB

*FLING
I JUST TOLD YOU TO WITHDRAWWWW !!
VNN
*AHHHH
あああああ
ダパアーン
*PLOOOSH
GOOD GRIEF, JUST WHEN I FORGET MY HUNGER AND FALL ASLEEP...

WHO DARES ?!
WHO WOULD DENIGRATE THE FACE OF A KNIGHT ?!

HN?!
……
ダダダ
*TMP
*TMP
*TMP
*WHOM
*WHOM
*WHOM
HN
NN
NN
NN
ビタッ..
*HALT

SCOUNDRELS!!!
I WILL DEAL WITH YOU!!!
WH-WHO THE HELL'S THAT?!
OUTTA NOWHERE ...?!
A KNIGHT'S INTUITION!!!
JUSTICE IS IN MY HEART!!!
TO ACT WHEN THE TIME ARRIVES !!
THAT IS TO BE A KNIGHT !!
NO NEED FOR ANY WORDS !!!
うおりゃああ
*OHRYAAA

ぜりゃあああ
*ZEIRYAAAA
*WHOCK
*WHACK
*WHACK
RAHHHHHH!!
H-HE'S TOO STR--
HNGG!
WHY'S THAT MUSTACHE ARMOR LOOK SO FAMILIAR ...?
WHAT THE HELL?
*BLASH
*BLASH
GULB
WAI...
HELP ...
I CAN'T ...
CAN'T SWIM...
べん
*WENK
WHAT KINDA PIRATE ARE YOU?

NOW'S OUR CHANCE!!
WELL AREN'T *YOU* HIGH AND MIGHTY!!
*HAIYAA
....

THE GATE'S GOING TO CLOOOSE.
CHILDREN OR NOT, I CAN'T BELIEVE WE MADE IT OUTSIDE THE CITY WITH THIS MANY KUSHAN AND NO HASSLE...
WHAT IN THE WORLD'S GOING ON?
THAT WOULD BE...
...A SECRET.
OF A SORT.
PIECE A' CAKE, THOUGH I'D SETTLE FOR DINNER.
STILL... THIS WITCH HE WAS LOOKING FOR...
COULD SHE BE GENUINE...?
AND THERE'S SOMETHING ON HER HAT...
SO... WE TRIED SO HARD TO GET THEM OUT...
...BUT NOW WHAT HAPPENS TO THESE CHILDREN?
THAT'S OBVIOUS.

WE'RE TAKING THEM WITH US, OF COURSE.
!
THERE YOU GO AGAIN...
THAT SETTLES IT!
BECAUSE YOUR MEDIUM SAYS SO!
UH...
ME-DIUM?
IS THAT ALL RIGHT...?
WELL, IT'S NOT AS IF WE CAN JUST ABANDON THEM.
I DON'T WANT TO SMEAR MUD ON A FUN MEMORY.
BESIDES, OUR LEADER'S NOT SO CHEAP A PERSON THAT HE'D COMPLAIN...
...OVER SOMETHING LIKE THIS.
RIGHT?
FINE...
WE'LL TAKE THEM TO THE BAND OF...
GREAT, I CAN JUST HEAR SIR LOCUS NOW...
HEY.

*FX: HYNN

*WHAP
TAKE IT.
I FILCHED IT FROM A PIRATE IN THE CONFUSION.
DON'T BE ABSURD!
A *STOLEN* SWORD ...?!
CAN YOU PROTECT THEM UNARMED?
AW, QUIT BEIN' A GOODY GOODY.
*GH
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO DROPPED HIS SWORD IN THE WATER!
LAME! HOW CAN YOU BECOME A KNIGHT *THAT* WAY?
AND *YOU!* YOU LOOKED AS SHAMEFUL AS AN OVER-TURNED FROG!
SO DID YOU! AND YOU LOOKED DRUNK, STUMBLIN' AROUND ON THAT BOAT!
'TIS THE SOUL OF A WARRIOR.
A NATURAL.
HE'S GOOD AT PROVOKING PEOPLE.
AT THAT, HE IS GIFTED.
YOU'LL BE EATING NOTHING BUT SOUP FOR DINNER TONIGHT!
*SHM SHM SHM
BACK AT YA! I'LL MAKE YOU EAT DIRT FOR DINNER!
*SH SH
JOOOE
SO, MISS WITCH...

IF YOU'D LIKE TO...
...WHY NOT COME ALONG WITH US?
EH...?

*GONNNNG
ゴーン
*GONNNNG
ゴーン
*GONNNNG
ゴーン
*GONNNNG
ゴーン

A MEAGER SUPPER
ささやかな晩餐

ALONG...
...WITH YOU?
THERE ARE ALL SORTS WHERE WE'RE FROM.
NOBLES, COMMONERS, WANDERERS, SERFS, MERCHANTS, EVEN KUSHAN.
A MELTING POT OF HUMANS LIVING TOGETHER.
ALSO...
...EVEN SOME WHO *AREN'T* HUMAN...
?

I MEAN, THERE ARE QUARRELS AT TIMES...
...BUT NO ONE JUDGES ANYONE OR DRIVES THEM OUT FOR THEIR BIRTH OR PERSONAL HISTORY...
...LIKE IN THIS CITY.
MAYBE YOU FEEL LIKE...
...THERE'S NO PLACE FOR YOU IN THE CURRENT WORLD.
WE'D WELCOME YOU.

I...
WH-WHATTA WE DO?
I...
....
....
HEY, MAN, DON'T LOOK AWAY...
*KRAK
MY JOOOOE!
YOU GET DISTRACTED...
...IN THE MIDDLE OF A FIGHT.
GET UP, STAND UP, JOOOOE!

IT WAS THE SAME WAY EARLIER! YOU FEARED TO BE THE ONE TO TAKE YOUR ENEMY'S LIFE WHEN HIS SWORD WAS DRAWN!
THAT'S *ARROGANCE!* BATTLE'S NOT SO GENEROUS THAT YOU CAN HELP YOUR FRIEND'S PREDICAMENT *THAT* WAY.
YOU'RE NOT QUALIFIED TO BE A SWORDSMAN!!
......!!
ISIDRO...
UGLY HUMAN WORLD.
'ZAT WHAT YOU SAY, WHEN I SAVED YOU?!
DONNNG.
ドスッ
WHMP
I SAVED YOU FIRST!
NOBODY ASKED YOU TO!

THANK YOU.
BUT...
...I...
...HAVE A PLACE...
...TO GO BACK TO.
WE'RE HUNGRY, TOO.
....
OKAY THEN.
SO, THAT MAN STANDING AT THE GATE.
?
はややや
*AGHHH
IS *HE* THE ONE, THEN...?
MEDIUM SENSOR.

PHOOEY. YOU TURNED ME DOWN.
I AM SORRY...
TOO BAD.
OH, RIGHT, I STILL HAVEN'T ASKED YOUR NAME. I'M SONIA.
I AM SCHIERKE.
I'M IVALERA.
WHUDZ RONG? YUH PRIDDY FEZZ A MEZZ.
ゼッ! ゼッ!
*HNAHHH HNAHHH
DOH-BEH STUBBRN, WHA NO' UZE THA' SWRRD?
ENOUGH! DON'T STAND UP!
JUST SLEEP, JOOOE!
I CAN'T TELL YOU FROM A MASHED MEAT BUN.
GO AHEAD, DRAW A SWORD OR A KNIFE. I'LL TAKE YOU BAREHANDED.
*BLFF
FIGHT!
OH YIH?! LOOG LYGE YUH WON' GE' I' 'TUL AH BREAG A' YUH BAG TEED!
SPEAK HUMAN, MOUND FACE!!
*KRNCH
CHIPS
*KRNCH
ボッ
*BOK
ゲシッ
*WHUNK
IF YOU PLAY TOO LONG, I'LL LEAVE YOU BEHIND, MULE.
YOU TOO, ISIDRO.

I'M MULE. WHAT'S YOUR NAME?
IDJIDO.
I'LL REMEMBER THAT NAME, IDJIDO!
IDJIDO!!
SCHIERKE.
GET AWAY FROM THIS CITY...
...AS FAST AS YOU CAN.
HUH ...?

*FX: BOING BOING

WHAT WAS...?!
?

UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN, OWL OF THE FOREST.
AGAIN...? THIS ISN'T GOODBYE?
HMHM...
THE YOUNG OWL AND YOUNG KITE...
...ARE SURE TO MEET AGAIN.
....
WHAT AN INTERESTIN' GIRL.
WHAT AN INTERESTIN' FACE.
OWUL?

WULL...
WEHD BEDDA GED BAG DOO. GADES GUNNA GLOZE.
"WE'D BETTER GET BACK TOO. GATE'S GONNA CLOSE"...
...IS WHAT HE SAID.
ザッ
*ZHA
UND...
...BOT DUH HAD 'N' CLODES...
UB...
...ZORRY.
ボソボソ
*MUMBLE MUMBLE
HUHH?
CAN'T HEAR YOU. TRY TALKIN' USIN' HUMAN WORDS.
ABOUT THE HAT AND CLOTHES, SOR--
ムニュ
*FX: SQUEEZE
ププッ
*PBBBT
DOUBLES!
AND I AM SORRY FOR BEING OBSTINATE...

THANK YOU...
...FOR COMING.
NOT AT ALL. I WAS OF NO USE.
KEH!
OH.
HE'S SULKIN'.
DON'T SPOIL HIM LIKE THAT, OR HE'LL TAKE ADVANTAGE.
NAU, FUD, FUD!
WITH THOSE LIPS, EVERYTHING'LL TASTE LIKE BLOOD.
AH DON' CAYA!
....

AND SO I TOTALLY ALMOST HAD HIM ON HIS KNEES!
STAGGERIN' AROUND IN THAT HEAVY ARMOR OF HIS.
*SHRREP
AS YOU CRY WHILE YOU EAT.
ONE MORE HIT, MAKE NO MISTAKE, HE'D HAVE BEEN FISH BAIT! HE WAS LUCKY, GETTIN' BAILED OUT BY A GIRL!
POKE POKE
IT HURTS ME JUST TO LOOK AT YOU.
STILL, THOUGH, IT'S NOTHIN' BUT RUFFIANS IN HERE. WEREN'T THERE ANY BETTER PLACES?
IT CANNOT BE HELPED. THE CITY IS SO FULL OF SOLDIERS, WE MUST BE THANKFUL THERE WAS ANY ROOM AT ALL.

CANTEENS ARE ALIKE ANYWHERE YOU GO. GAMBLING, FIGHTS, WHORES...
*UHEEE
HEY, GIRL, C'MERE 'N' FILL MY CUP.
UH, SIR...
*CHOCK
...AND DRUNKS.
PLEASE DON'T LIFT YOUR FOOT OVER THE TABLE DURING A MEAL.
SORRY TO KEEP EVERYONE WAITING.
COME ON.
B-BUT...

TADAHHH!
WOWWW!
...
STITCHES FOR WITCHES.
THIS INN'S PROPRIETRESS WAS KIND ENOUGH...
...TO LET US HAVE SOME OF HER DAUGHTER'S OLD CLOTHES.

IT IS SOMEWHAT CONSTRICTIVE AND DIFFICULT TO MOVE IN.
AND I FEEL NERVOUS WITHOUT MY WAND... IT FEELS AWKWARD...
BUT OH-SO-LOVELY. ♡
IT IS TO BE ENDURED, WHILE IN THIS CITY.
IT SUITS YOU QUITE WELL.
A BROOM MIGHT WORK BETTER THAN A WAND.
YOU LOOK LIKE ANY OTHER CITY GIRL, AT LEAST.
チラ
...
*FX: GLANCE
WELL... IT'S A NICE DISGUISE.
NO ONE'S GONNA GUESS THAT WHAT'S INSIDE'S A SCAAARY WITCH WHO LEVELS VILLAGES.
ズズ・・
*SSSP
WH...
A MONKEY TO THE END.
YOU NEVER LEARN.
WHAT?
ギャハハハハ
*GYA HAH HAH HAH HAH

WHAT HAVE WE *HERE?* THREE GIRLS IN THIS CORNER... BUT ONE'S A KID.
HEY, GOOD-LOOKIN'!
BOOZY BREATH.
MORE VICTIMS.
SO, WANT TO COME HAVE A DRINK?
I MUST DECLINE.
GET LOST!
*PLACH
!
OH, NO!
AHH...
HEY! DRUNK-ASS!!
WHY, YOU PEOPLE!
WHAT, BOY?
YOU THINK YOU SHOULD BE HERE?!
A *KID* IN A PLACE LIKE *THIS*, DR--

WHAT THE HELL?!
AGHH?!
I GET THE FEELIN' HE WAS SAYIN' SOMETHIN' DOWNRIGHT PROPER...
THAT WAS PAYBACK...
...FOR STAININ' OUR GIRL'S NICEST CLOTHES.
..."OUR"...

*FX: KRASSH

*FX: SHAKE SHAKE

MISTRESS, THIS CITY...
...THIS WORLD OF PEOPLE...
...IS HOPELESSLY VULGAR...
IS THIS KINDA THING A THEME TODAY?
OHH, FIGHTING ON AN EMPTY STOMACH...
A KNIGHT MUST EAT, TOO...
*FX: TOTTER TOTTER
*CRASSSH
ドシャアア
*WHUDDD
*WOOF WOOF
OH, LORD, I DO THANK THEEEE!
*OOHAHAHAHAHA
OHH ?!
WHAT'S THIS?!
*FX GLANCE GLANCE
キョロ。 キョロ。
SHOO!
*GRRRR
*GATHER
*GATHER
*STUFF
FOOLISH...
*RAHHHHH
OH, WHY MUST THIS HAPPEN?
SMASH!
DONNNG

EHEHEH... WIMMINNN.
*FX: SHFF
TAKE 'IM OUT!
TAHH!
*KRISSSH
...AND DISGRACEFUL.
*WHMP
*CRASSSH
ALTHOUGH...
NOT BAD AT ALL.
WHY, YOU...!
*VIP
MISTRESS...
DESPITE ALL THAT...
...I CAN SMILE.

HOMING
帰巣

BERSERK

MMM.
IT BAKED WELL THIS TIME.
サク。
*SHNK
I'M SURE EVEN LORD GRIFFITH WOULD LIKE SOME OF THIS.
GOOD EFFORT, YOUR HIGHNESS.
THANKS. YOU HELPED SO MUCH, ANNA.
THE COUNTRY COOKING OF MY MOTHER'S FAMILY WAS NEVER ALL THAT MUCH TO SPEAK OF...
WELL, I SUPPOSE CONFECTIONS CAN RARELY BE EATEN ON A BATTLEFIELD.
BUT, YOU NEEDN'T GO OUT OF YOUR WAY TO BAKE UP SUCH A PRETEXT.
JUST WALK OVER AND SEE HIM.
N-NO! LORD GRIFFITH SEEMS TO BE SO BUSY.
I COULD NEVER GO AND BOTHER HIM.

TRUE, HE CERTAINLY HAS TO WORK HARD IN ORDER TO RECLAIM MIDLAND...
SO PLEASE, GO GIVE HIM THESE FRESH BAKED GOODS AS A REWARD FOR HIS EFFORTS.
THANK GOODNESS, REALLY, THAT THE PRINCESS IS CHEERFUL AGAIN.
IN FACT, I'D NEVER SEEN HER **THIS** CHEERFUL EVEN **BEFORE** WINDHAM FELL TO THE KUSHAN.
EVEN THOUGH...
...THIS ACTUALLY **IS** A BATTLEFIELD.

ALMOST LIKE A PAINTING...
ONE CUT FROM ETERNITY...
IT FEELS LIKE...
...I MUSTN'T TOUCH HIM...
LORD GRIFFIIITH!
*TMP
*TMP
*TMP
HEY, HOLD ON...!

WHEEE!
HERE I AAAM!
WELCOME BACK, SONIA.

HOW WAS THE SEA?
IT WAS LOADS OF FUN. I EVEN MADE A NEAT FRIEND, AND WE HAD A LITTLE ADVENTURE.
THANKS TO WHICH, I'M EXHAUSTED.
GOOD WORK, MULE. I'D LIKE TO HEAR ABOUT THE CITY ONCE YOU'VE CAUGHT YOUR BREATH.
AND ABOUT YOUR FACE.
AYE!
IN THAT CASE, I COULD...
UH...
EXCUSE ME...

AH, PRINCESS CHARLOTTE.
....
LORD GRIFFITH.
HERE...
I BAKED SOME SWEETS.
IF YOU WISH...
E... EVERYONE COULD...
WOW, SWEETS?
LET'S HAVE A LOOK-SEE!
MMMM, GOOD!
A MARVELOUS TASTE... AND FLUFFY!
HEY...

HEY!
HERE, LORD GRIFFITH.
IT'S SWEET AND DELICIOUS.
...
YOU HAVE SOME TOO, MULE.
*MNCH MNCH
モグ モグ
NOW LOOK ...
IT SMELLS NICE...
SWEET.
SOMEHOW, IT SETS THE MOUTH AT EASE.
I NEVER DREAMED I WOULD ENCOUNTER SUCH A GENTLE TASTE ON THE BATTLEFIELD.
THANK YOU, PRINCESS CHARLOTTE.

OH...
NOT AT ALL.
I AM HAPPY, THOUGH...
...IF IT PLEASES YOU.
C'MERE A MINUTE.
*FX: TUG
クイ
WHAT'S YOUR ISSUE?
YOU ARE!
HAVE A LITTLE CONSIDERATION!
...

LORD GRIFFITH IS BUSY, AND THEY HARDLY HAVE ANY TIME TO BE ALONE TOGETHER.
IF YOU'RE A WOMAN, NOT TO MENTION A MEDIUM WHO CAN SENSE PEOPLE'S THOUGHTS, THEN EMPATHIZE!
HOW TORMENTED MUST SHE HAVE BEEN...
...BY LONELINESS AND ANXIETY, ALONE FOR YEARS AMONGST THE ENEMY?
NOW SHE FINALLY GETS HER WISH TO BE REUNITED WITH HER LOVER.
*PLUNK
カポ
YOU CAN HAVE THAT.
OFHH...
BYE.
GOOH GEEFH...
MMM, GOOH...

GOOD EVENING.
......
MIND IF I WARM MYSELF?
AS YOU WISH.
....
パチ。。
NICE SONG.
A LITTLE LONELY, THOUGH.

YOU'RE ALWAYS BY YOURSELF.
AREN'T YOU LONELY?
I'M A HUNTER.
I FEEL CALMER ALONE.
HMMMM...
ARE HUNTERS ALWAYS ALONE?
DO THEY WALK ALONE IN MOUNTAINS AND FORESTS?
THERE ARE THOSE WHO ARE OTHERWISE...
BUT NOT ME.
I HUNT ALONE.

*HOOOO
FOR DAYS I RUN THROUGH MOUNTAINS AND RIVERS, CHASING MY PREY.
I LURK ALONE DEEP IN THE FOREST.
THROUGH SO MANY NIGHTS...
...I LOSE TRACK OF TIME.
AND THEN...
BEFORE I KNOW IT...
...I TOO...
...HAVE BECOME A ***BEAST.***
......
AND THEN ?
ザァァァ...ァ...
*ZSHHHHSS
YOU KNOW, I...
I WAS...
...ALONE, TOO.
I COULD SEE THINGS OTHER PEOPLE COULDN'T...
HEAR VOICES THEY COULDN'T.
MY WORLD ALONE...
...WAS DIFFERENT FROM THEIRS.
*SNAKT
....
I SEE.

SHE WASN'T THE ONLY ONE...
...WHO WAS LONELY AND ANXIOUS.
*HHHHH
スー
....

THAT NIGHT, I HAD A DREAM.
A DREAM OF A KITE AND AN OWL...
...PLAYING IN A MOONLIT FOREST.

BERSERK

VANDIMION
ヴァンディミオン

BERSERK

LOOK CLOSELY, PLEASE.
CONCEN-TRAAATE.
SO AS TO BURN THE IMAGE INTO YOUR MIND.
SLOWLY ...
...CLOSE YOUR EYES.
NOW IMAGINE IT.
THE IMAGE OF THE APPLE YOU JUST SAW...
SHAPE, COLOR, AS MUCH DETAIL AS YOU CAN.
NOT RUSHED...
...BUT SLOWLY.
IT IS NO USE. THE IMAGE IS BLURRED AND WILL NOT TAKE FIRM SHAPE.
THAT IS HOW IT IS, AT FIRST.

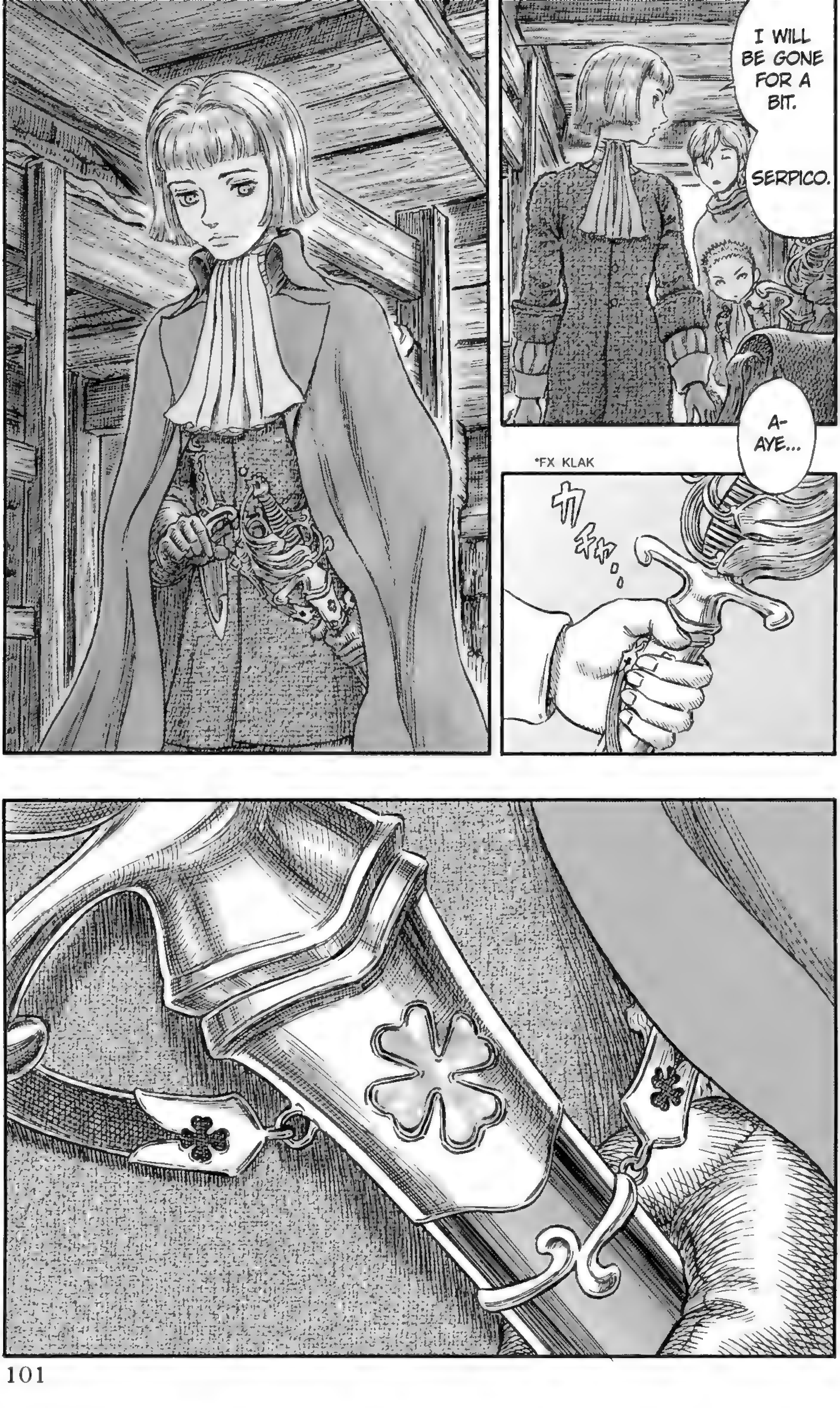
THIS IS THE FIRST STEP TOWARDS BECOMING A MAGIC USER.
IT IS BASIC PRACTICE FOR "TANGIBLY IMAGINING A PHENOMENON WITHIN YOUR MIND."
TANGIBLY...
...IMAGINING...
MAGIC IS NOT ACCOMPLISHED MERELY BY RECITING A SPELL AND DRAWING SYMBOLS.
IT IS THE CHAINING OF IMAGES IN CONJUNCTION WITH THOSE THINGS THAT FIRST YIELDS EFFICACY.
THE ESSENCE OF MAGIC IS THE WORLD OF THOUGHT.
IT IS PRACTICED IN THE ASTRAL WORLD.
YOU HAVE ALREADY FELT A PORTION OF THAT, FARNESE.
I'M A PORTION. ♡
THE TROLLS AND THE OGRE...
...AND THAT LIGHT, YES?

THAT FOUR-HUED LIGHT IS...
...THE MANIFESTATION OF POWER...
...FROM ME PERSONALLY PROCEEDING INTO THE ASTRAL WORLD, OFFERING SUPPLICATION AND RECEIVING ASSISTANCE FROM THE BEINGS...
...KNOWN AS THE "FOUR CARDINAL KINGS."
THE ASTRAL WORLD IS COMPRISED OF WILLS AND POWERS--MEMORIES AND PORTENTS IN VARIOUS DOMAINS.
TO ACCOMPLISH THINGS IN THE MIDST OF THAT, MORE THAN ANYTHING IT IS NECESSARY TO MAKE YOUR MIND...YOUR *ETHEREAL BODY...*ADHERE FIRMLY AS A PROJECTION OF YOUR PHYSICAL BODY, SO AS NOT TO LOSE YOURSELF.
WE MAGIC USERS CALL THAT UNWAVERING...
...STABLE PROJECTION A BODY OF LIGHT, A *"LUMINOUS BODY."*
LUMINOUS BODY...
THAT APPLE IS YOUR FIRST STEP IN OBTAINING YOUR LUMINOUS BODY, FARNESE.
......
PERSISTENT PRACTICE IS SURE TO BEAR FRUIT.
PLEASE DO YOUR BEST.

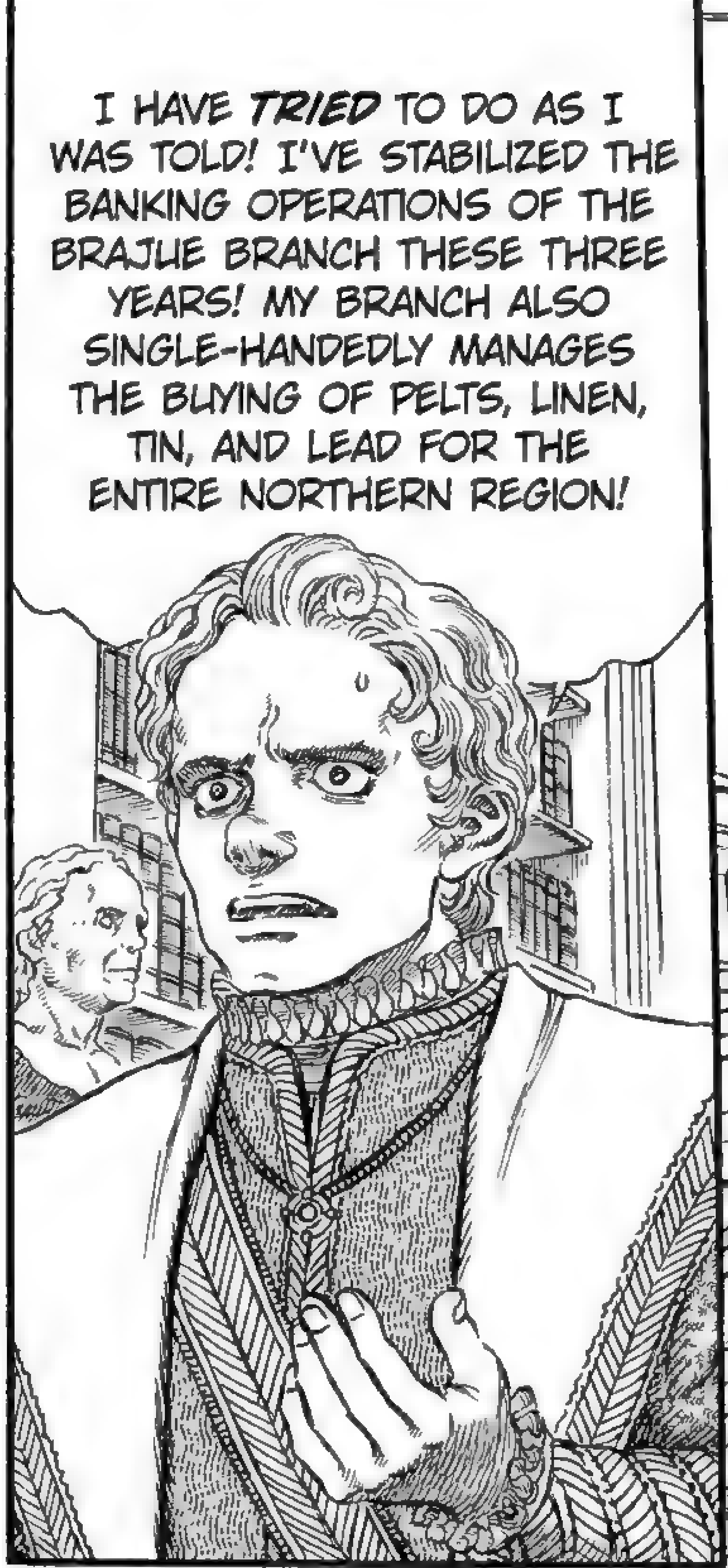
BUT...
...RIGHT NOW I'M...
パシッ
*SNATCH
しゃく。しゃく。しゃく。
*FX: SHOMP SHOMP SHOMP
AHH...
ギィ。ギィ。
*FX: GREE GREE
AHHH MAN, FORGET IT. NOT A SINGLE BITE.
THAT WAS SURE A VAIN EFFORT.
WELCOME BACK. HOW DID THINGS GO?
THEY WENT NOWHERE.

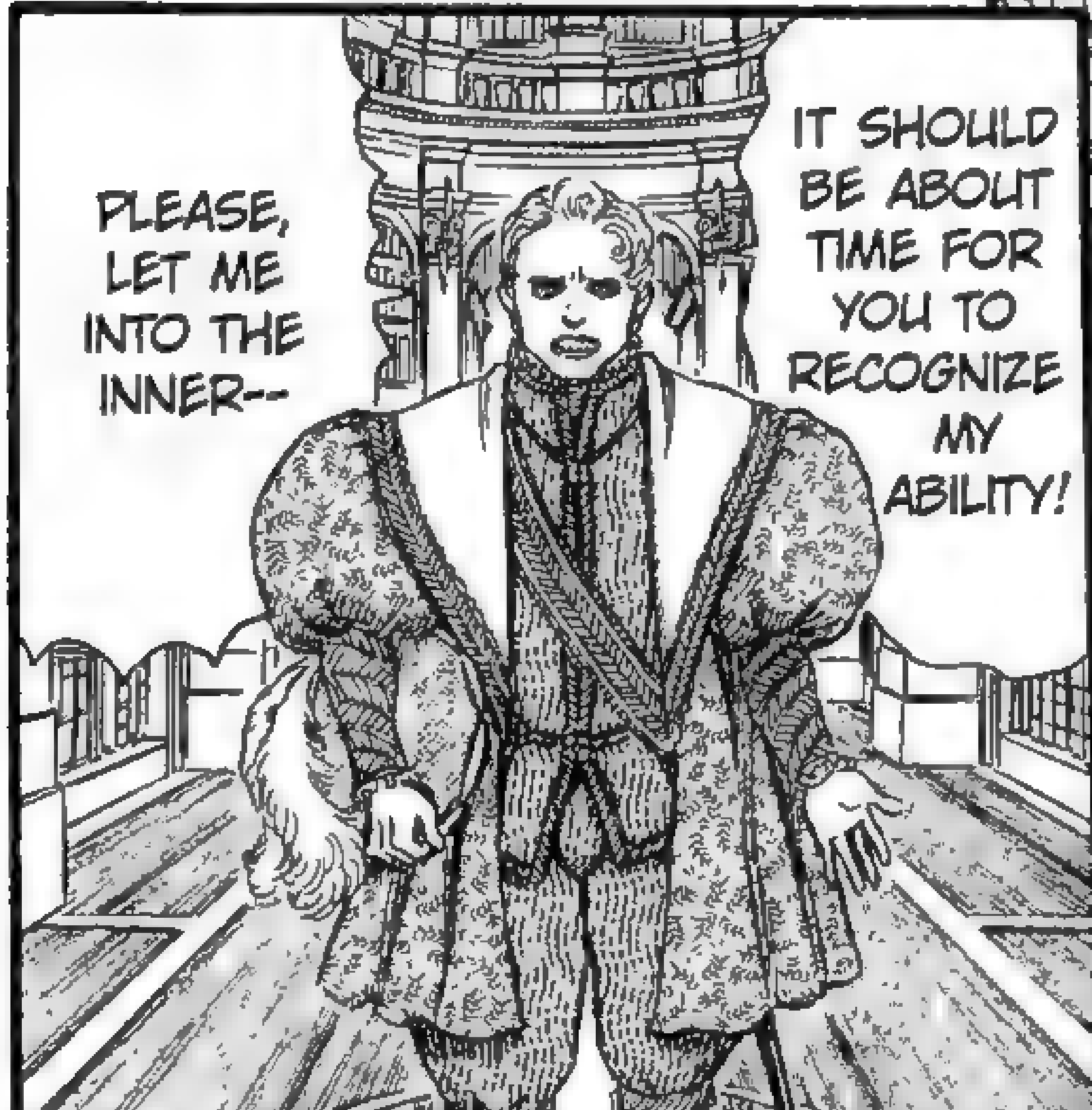
WE TRIED EVERY MARITIME TRADING FIRM, AND EVEN A PRIVATE SHIP CAPTAIN IN THE CITY...
...BUT EVERY SHIP HAS BEEN COMMANDEERED AS A WARSHIP OR HAS ACCEPTED MILITARY-RELATED COMMISSIONS. THEY CURTLY...WELL, ALL OF THEM TURNED US AWAY WITHOUT NEGOTIATION.
WE WALKED OUR LEGS OFF ALL DAY IN THAT CROWD.
WE OVERESTIMATED OUR PROSPECTS.
I ASSUMED SOMETHING'D WORK OUT SO LONG AS WE REACHED A PORT...
...BUT IT LOOKS LIKE THIS IS DIFFERENT FROM HOW OUR JOURNEY'S BEEN LEFT TO CHANCE SO FAR.
GUESS NOW WE'LL JUST HAVE TO PLUNDER SOME SHIP...
AGAIN, SUCH NASTINESS.
ALL SET TO GO, EH?
UM...

WOULD YOU...
...MIND LEAVING THIS TO ME?
EH?
WHAT, FARNY?
YOU GOT SOME IDEA?
!
LADY FARNESE, YOU CANNOT MEAN...


I WILL BE GONE FOR A BIT.
SERPICO.
A-AYE...
*FX KLAK
カチャ。。

WHY, FATHER?!


I HAVE *TRIED* TO DO AS I WAS TOLD! I'VE STABILIZED THE BANKING OPERATIONS OF THE BRAJUE BRANCH THESE THREE YEARS! MY BRANCH ALSO SINGLE-HANDEDLY MANAGES THE BUYING OF PELTS, LINEN, TIN, AND LEAD FOR THE ENTIRE NORTHERN REGION!


IT SHOULD BE ABOUT TIME FOR YOU TO RECOGNIZE MY ABILITY!
PLEASE, LET ME INTO THE INNER--

ABILITY?
MANIFICO.
YOU'VE DONE NOTHING MORE THAN WALK UPON THE ROAD I'VE PAVED.
*GH
WHY IS IT...?
TO MY BROTHER GIORGIO YOU GAVE THE POSITIONS OF GENERAL FINANCIAL MANAGER OF THE HOLY SEE'S ACCOUNTING OFFICE AND JOINT MANAGER OF THE VANDIMION BANK...
...AND TO MY BROTHER POLIZIANO YOU GAVE THE GRAND GOVERNOR-GENERALSHIP OF THE REALM OF THE HOLY SEE...
...SO WHY SHOULD I NOT--

THAT WAS AFTER CAREFUL CONSIDERATION OF THEIR RESPECTIVE TALENTS.
YOU NEED BUT HOLD YOUR TONGUE AND FOLLOW MY INSTRUCTIONS.
BUT...!
ENOUGH.
...
LEAVE ME.
YOU HAVE A GUEST, MASTER.
I RECALL NO AFTERNOON APPOINTMENTS TODAY...
IT APPEARS TO BE A LADY DRESSED IN MALE GARB, AND HER ATTENDANT...
SHE ENTRUSTED THIS TO ME.
THIS IS...
!
THE LADY GIVES HER NAME AS *FARNESE DO VANDIMION.*

....
WHAT ?
!

カッ
カッ
………
カッ
カッ
ギュ…

*FX: TAK TAK

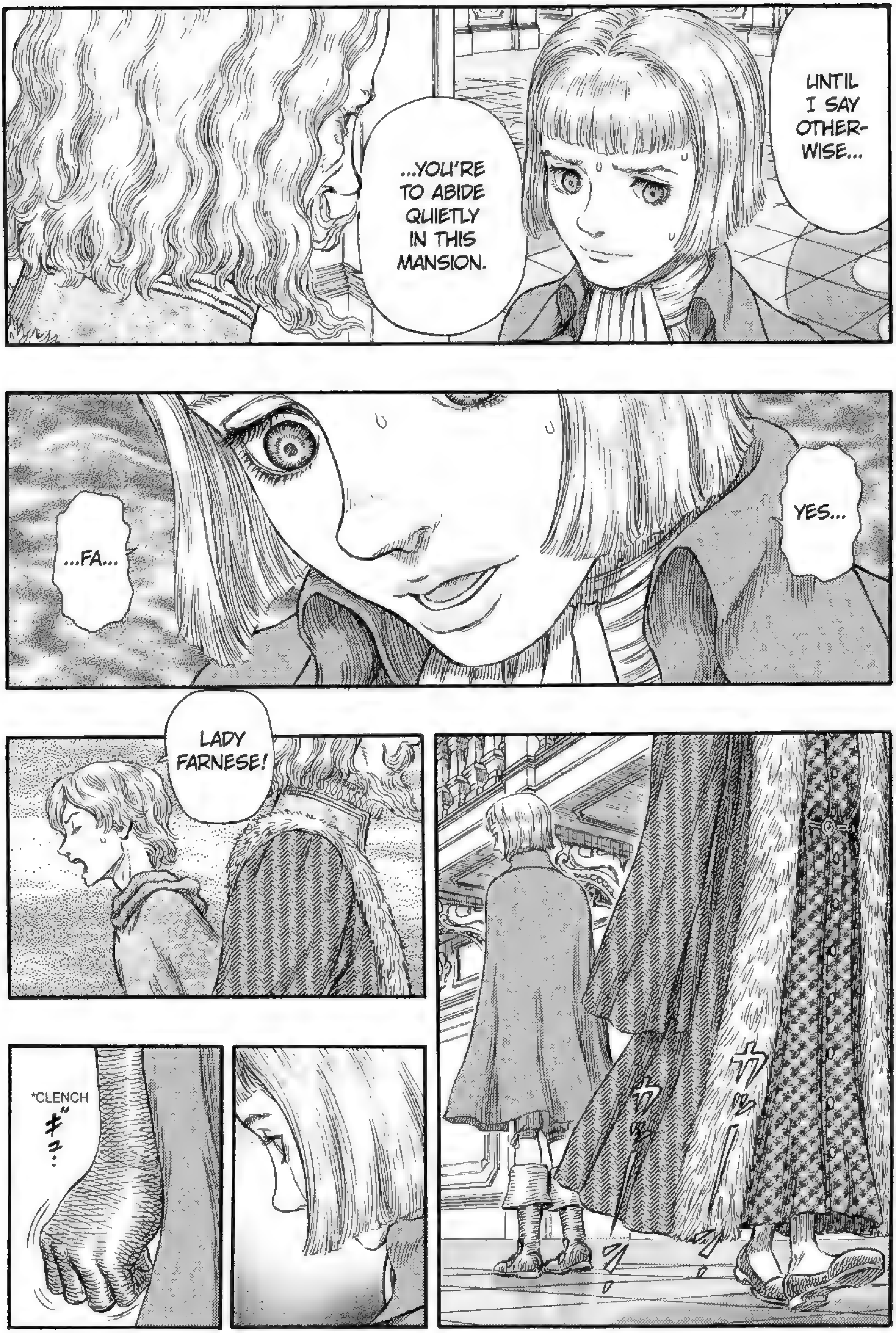
*FX: TAK TAK

*FX: CLENCH

……
ゴク…
*GULP
F…
FA…
WHY HAVE YOU COME HERE?

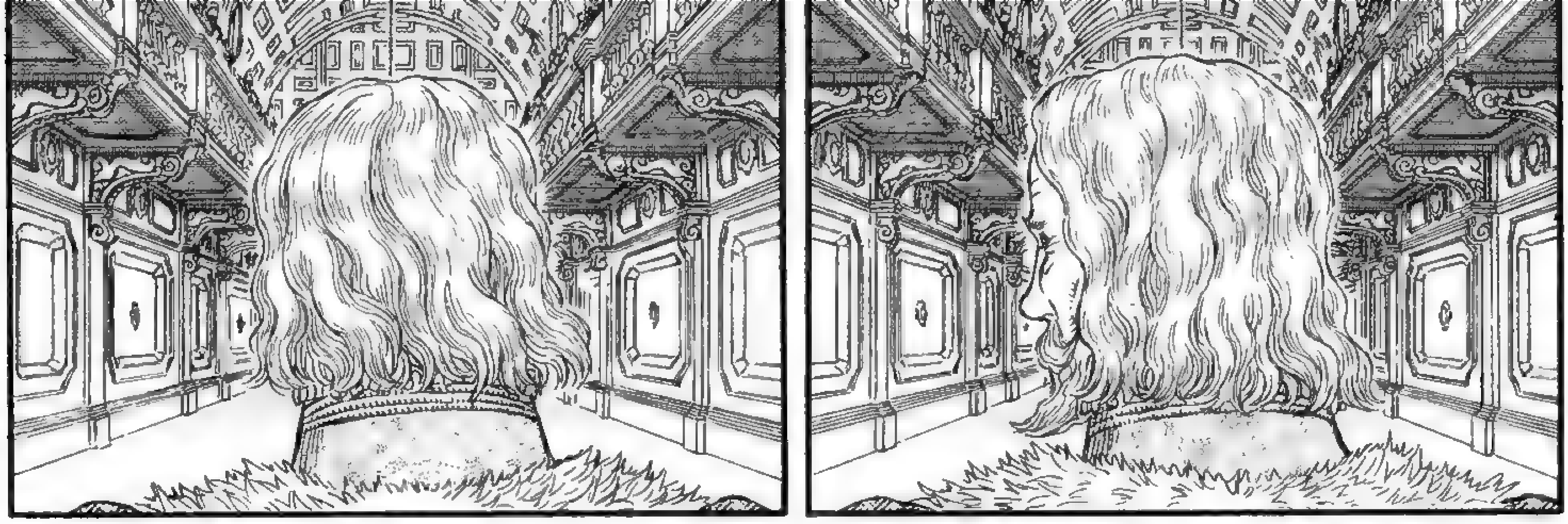
....
I HEARD ABOUT THE HOLY IRON CHAIN KNIGHTS.
THAT THEY WERE DESTROYED BY A KUSHAN INVASION WHILE GUARDING ALBION.
I WON'T SAY THAT WAS YOUR INDISCRETION.
BUT FIGUREHEAD OR NOT, YOU WERE IN CHARGE OF A BAND OF KNIGHTS.
FOR YOU ALONE TO SURVIVE SHAMELESSLY AND, FURTHER, GO INTO HIDING...
YOU WILL OF COURSE APPEAR BEFORE THE HOLY CITY'S COURT SUPREME TO RECEIVE JUDGMENT.

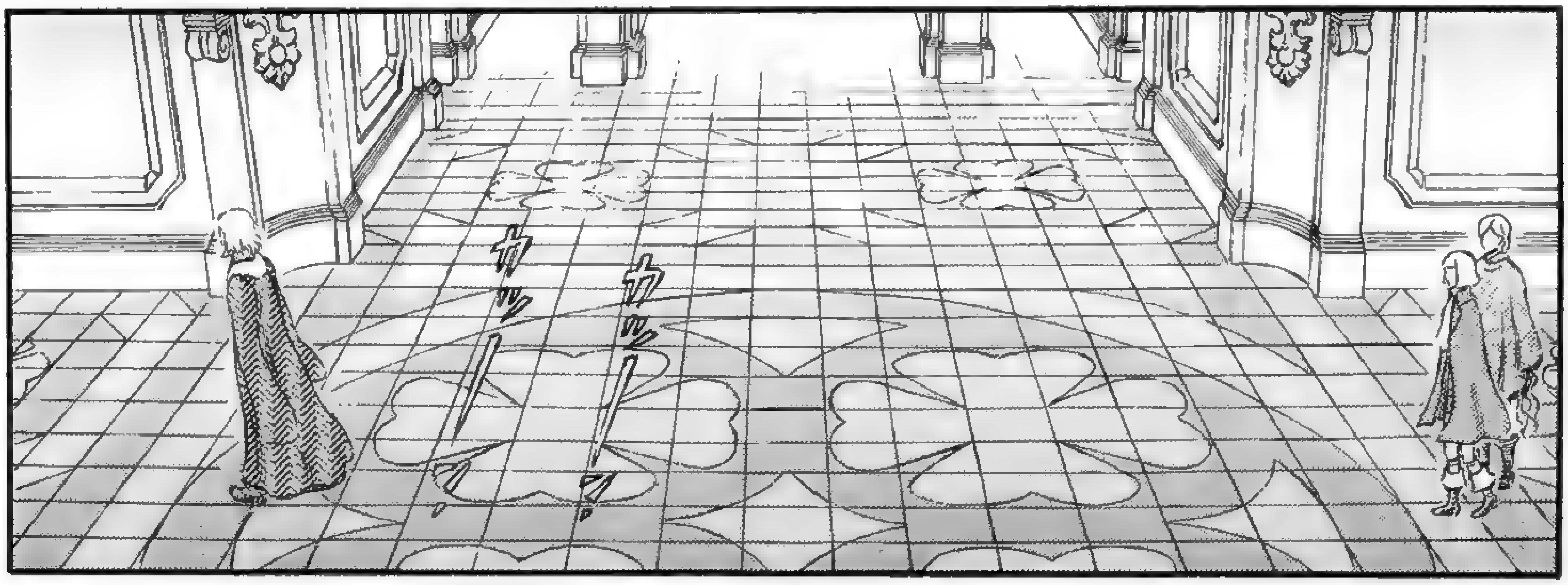
IT WOULD SEEM THAT...
...NO MATTER WHERE YOU GO...
...THE STAR UNDER WHICH YOU WERE BORN WILL SEE TO IT THAT YOU SULLY THE HONOR OF OUR *VANDIMION* NAME.


UNTIL I SAY OTHERWISE...
...YOU'RE TO ABIDE QUIETLY IN THIS MANSION.
YES...
...FA...
カッ カッ
LADY FARNESE!
*CLENCH
ギュ

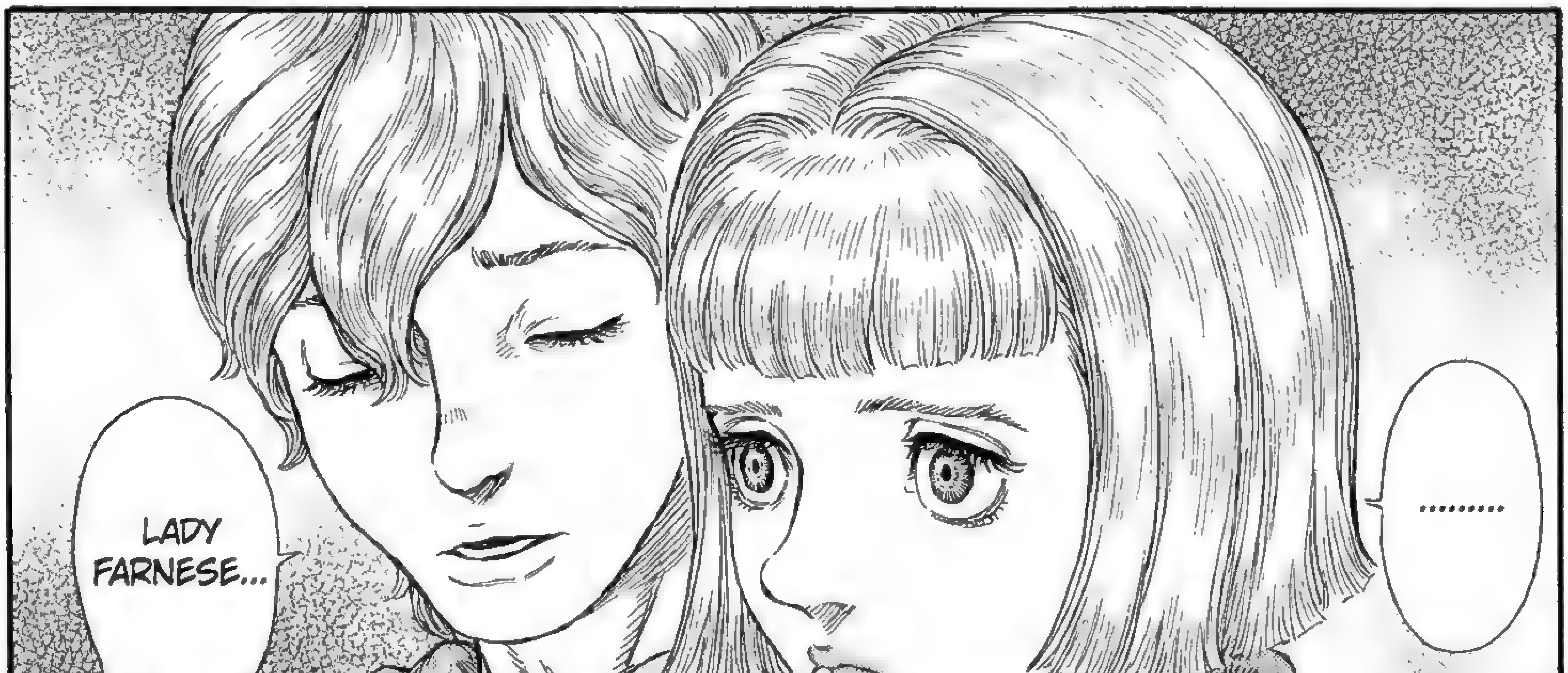
*FX: TAK TAK

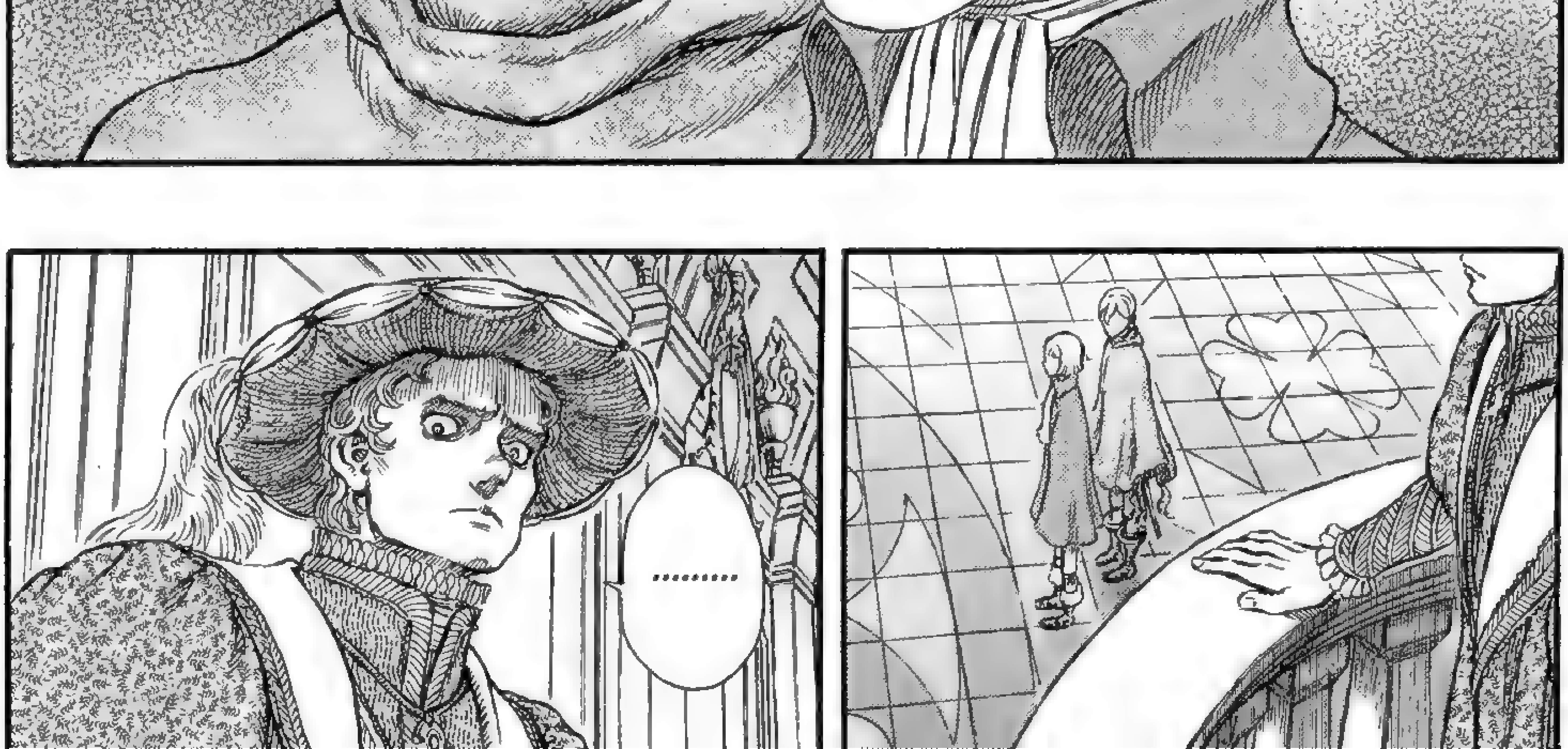
FATHER ...!!
UH...
UH...
I...
FRIENDS...
A SHIP...





*FX: TAK TAK


………
LADY FARNESE…



庭園にて
IN THE GARDEN

バシャ バシャ
*FX: SPLASH SPLASH
CASCA!
STOP THAT!

SETTLE D--
パシャ
*PLISH
BWAA!
パシャ
*PLISH
C'MONNN
I SAID I'D HELP YOU.
NO THANK YOU!
TCH!
DOIN' SOMETHIN' YOU'RE NOT USED TO ALONE IS TOUGH...
...AND I'M ONLY SAYIN' IT BECAUSE I'M BEIN' NICE...
...SO WHAT'S UP WITH THIS CRAP?!
YOU'VE GOT A PREVIOUS OFFENSE.
AHHH, NOOO! PLEASE DON'T PULL ON THAT!
女
*WOMEN
銭湯
*PUBLIC BATH
*MEIJI

THIS IS HOW YOU APPRECIATE A COMPANION WHO'S COME THROUGH SO MANY BATTLES WITH YOU? REALLY, IT'S SO SAD, I CAN'T EVEN GET PISSED ABOUT IT.
IT'LL ONLY END IN TEARS IF YOU RESIST HER.
I'LL SHOW YOU THE POWER OF SADNESS OF SOMEONE WHO COULDN'T BE TRUSTED!
CRAFTYYY.
YOUR NASTY NATURE'S TURNED ME INTO A RAVIN' BEAST!
COMBINE TO FORM ISICHAIR.
WHAT'D I JUST FEEL?!
......!
H...
HEY...!
CASCA!
OOGYOOO
*TOTTER

*FX: KTUNK KTUNK KTUNK

*FX: MFF MFF

*FX: FWMP

*TUNK
COME ON! I TOLD YOU TO STOP!
*FX: BLOOSH
AHHHH!
YOU AREN'T LISTENING TO A WORD I SAY!
JUST USE A SPELL TO MAKE HER SETTLE DOWN.
E-EVEN I CAN HANDLE THIS MUCH WITHOUT USING MAGIC...
*FX: TWIRL TWIRL
*FLING
EEEEEEK!
*PLOFF
ENOUGH ALREADY! CAS--

アデデ
*OWWWW
カッ
*FLASH
*COWER
バリッ
*ZZZZT
バリッ
*ZZZZT
ブスブス
*FX: SMOLDER
プルプルプル
*FX: SHUDDER
PLEASE DON'T REMEMBER THIS!
P...
CINDERS...
ダッ
*DASH
うえ～ん
*UWEHHH
THEY'RE TAKIN' SO LONG.
ゴホ
*KOFF
ピクッピクッ
*TWITCH TWITCH
ブクブク
*BLLB BLLB

IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME...
...SINCE I TOOK A BATH BY MYSELF.
パシャ
*PLASH
CASCA...
I WONDER IF HER HAIR'S BEING WASHED PROPERLY...
MILADY.
YOUR CHANGE OF CLOTHES IS PREPARED.

YES...
THEY CAN DO WITHOUT ME, AT LEAST...
......!
WHERE ARE MY DAGGER AND SHIRT...?
THEY WERE DAMAGED, SO WE THOUGHT WE WOULD DISPOSE OF THEM...
SHOULD YOU REQUIRE, WE WILL PREPARE NEW ONES.

MILADY!
PLEASE, WAIT!
PLEASE, YOUR CLOTHES...!
L...
LADY FARNESE!
YOU!
WAIT RIGHT THERE!
UM, YES...?
ホッ
*HOH

コツ
*TOK
YOUR BEHAVIOR IS AS UNPRECEDENTED AS EVER, LITTLE SISTER.
MANIFICO...
BROTHER.
NO WONDER FATHER'S AMAZED.
....
HOW LONG IT'S BEEN.
WE'VE NOT SEEN EACH OTHER IN YEARS, SINCE BEFORE YOU WERE SENT TO THE CONVENT.
HAVE YOU MET WITH OUR OLDER BROTHERS?

NO...
NATURALLY!
HA HA HA HA
THE VANDIMIONS AREN'T VERY TIGHTLY KNIT.
BUT MUCH REGARDING YOU HAS REACHED MY EARS.
YOUR WORK WITH THE HOLY IRON CHAIN KNIGHTS, AND THE UNFORTUNATE TROUBLES THAT FOLLOWED.
....
A PITY, THAT.
BUT LIFT UP YOUR EYES.
THERE'S NO NEED TO WORRY.
NO FAULT LIES WITH YOU.

INSTEAD, FATHER DESERVES THE BLAME.
HE GAVE HIS TACIT CONSENT WHEN THE HOLY SEE'S PRIESTS MADE YOU THE LEADER OF THE HOLY IRON CHAIN KNIGHTS, THOUGH YOU KNOW NOTHING, AND NOW SEE HOW HE SPEAKS TO YOU.
THAT ISN'T ALL.
I REMEMBER WHEN I'D VISIT THE MANSION IN THE HOLY CITY, I'D SEE HER.
THIS GIRL, WANDERING THE HUGE GARDEN ALL ALONE, LIKE SOME KIND OF GHOST.
....
WAS HE RAISING A PURE FLOWER IN A GREENHOUSE TO PROTECT IT FROM THE UNCLEANNESS OF THE OUTSIDE WORLD...?
THAT'S HARDLY WHAT THAT WAS. HE JUST AIMLESSLY LEFT YOU TO YOURSELF.
HE DID NOTHING SHORT OF ABANDONING HIS RESPONSIBILITIES AS A PARENT.

EVEN WHEN YOU SET FIRE TO THE MANSION...
...FATHER WAS THE ONE TO BLAME FOR GOADING HIS ONLY DAUGHTER THAT FAR.
EVEN IF THE WORDS "VANDIMION DEVIL CHILD" PASSED PEOPLE'S LIPS, THAT IS NOT YOUR OWN INDISCRETION.
DEVIL CHILD...
I...
....

IT'S NOT THAT I DON'T UNDERSTAND HOW YOU FEEL.
EH...?
THAT **BASTARD** THINKS OF HIS FAMILY AS NOTHING MORE THAN COGS IN THE GIANT MACHINE CALLED VANDIMION!
INFERIOR PRODUCTS THAT DON'T MEET HIS APPROVAL ARE CAST OFF WITHOUT HESITATION OR ANY SHOW OF CONCERN!
JUST AS IF THEY WERE STONES BY THE WAYSIDE...!
....
SO... WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE?
ACTUALLY...

A JOURNEY?
TO THE WEST, BY SHIP, WITH COMPANIONS...?
FOR A WOMAN, YOU...
NO.
RATHER, I GUESS THIS IS *LIKE* YOU.
WE TALKED WITH TRADERS THROUGHOUT VRITANNIS, BUT EVERY SHIP WAS ENGAGED WITH THE WAR EFFORT...
SO I THOUGHT TO SEE IF FATHER WOULD USE HIS INFLUENCE...
HM...
VRITANNIS IS NOW LITERALLY OVERFLOWING WITH ANCHORED SHIPS...
BUT IT'S NO EXAGGERATION TO SAY NEARLY ALL OF THEM ARE INVOLVED WITH THE WAR.
THE IDEA OF FINDING A SHIP TO CARRY PERSONAL TRAVELERS AT A TIME LIKE THIS...
EVEN IF YOU *DID* ASK FATHER...
....

A SINGLE SHIP.
THAT WOULD NOT BE BEYOND *MY* POWER.
WHA...?
BUT IN RETURN...
...I *TOO* HAVE A REQUEST TO MAKE...
A REQUEST ...?
...MY SISTER.
....

YEAH HHH!
GO! GO!
BLOW PAST 'IM, CRABZALES!
DO IT! DO IT, CRABINGHAM!
WHAP WHAP
FOR GOODNESS' SAKE, ALL OF YOU!
ギィ
GREEE
WOULD YOU STOP PLAYING AROUND?!
HELP OUT A LITTLE!
ヨロ
STAGGER
ヨロ
STAGGER
GOOD-FOR-NOTHIN'S!

PLEASE SEE TO CASCA'S MEAL.
EGHH, MEEE?
LEAVE IT TO ME! I GOTS EXPERIENCE!
I WONDER.
OH, NO, YOU MUSTN'T GET UP, GUTS.
I'M ALL RIGHT, I JUST HAVE A SLIGHT FEVER...
THERE'S TOO MUCH RACKET TO SLEEP.
NO! IT IS BECAUSE YOUR MIND HAS BEEN REMISS SINCE COMING HERE, THE FATIGUE FROM YOUR PREVIOUS BATTLES HAS COME OUT ALL AT ONCE.
YOU MUST REST A LITTLE AND RECOVER FROM YOUR WOUNDS.
IT WAS ALMOST THE END FOR YOU.
I USED THE KITCHEN TO MAKE THIS MEDICINAL SOUP. IT MIGHT BE A LITTLE BITTER, THOUGH.
...
CUTE!
*WHHH
EH...
I'LL FEED MYSELF.
NO, YOU WILL NOT. SAY AHHHH.
*FX: FIDGET
もじ もじ
*FX: FIDGET
もじ もじ

あ゛あ゛
お゛お゛
*AGHHHH
ギ…ッ
*FX: GREE
PHOOEY!
*FLINCH
ビクゥ
あーん
あ！
*AHHH AHHH
THE END.
はやや
*FX: NYAGHHH
DAAAMN, TOOK LONG ENOUGH.
WHERE'D YOU WANDER OFF TO ALL NIGHT?
*TWITCH TWITCH
ビクビク
ブラーン
*DANGLE

WHATCHA DOIN' ALL DRESSED UP?
WELL? WHAT ABOUT THE SHIP?
WHERE'S FARNY?
チュポン
PONK
A SHIP...
...HAS BEEN ARRANGED.
YAY!
....
LADY FARNESE...
LADY FARNESE...
...WILL NOT...
...BE REJOINING YOU.

THE WHITE LILY OF THE FIELD
野の白百合

*SLURP
んちゅ！
FARNY?
SHE'S NOT COMIN' BACK?
....
WHAT'S UP WITH THAT, SERPICO?
WHO'S GONNA LOOK AFTER CASCA?
......
TAKE THIS.
IF YOU SHOW THIS LETTER TO ANY TRADER IN THE CITY, YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO ACQUIRE A SHIP AND AS MANY SAILORS AS YOU NEED. PLEASE DO NOT OPEN THE SEAL.
AND, SCHIERKE ...

I AM RETURNING THESE BORROWED ITEMS.
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
UM...
ON BEHALF OF THE VANDIMION FAMILY, I OFFER THE SINCEREST GRATITUDE FOR SAFELY RETURNING THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY'S DAUGHTER, FARNESE DO VANDIMION, TO THIS PLACE.
IT AMOUNTS TO LITTLE, BUT OUR VANDIMION BANK SHALL SHOULDER THE BURDEN OF ANY AND ALL EXPENDITURES YOUR GROUP INCURS WHILE IN THIS CITY.
スピ〜〜
*FWEEEE

AGAIN, I EXTEND OUR FORMAL THANKS.
NOW, BY YOUR LEAVE...
W...
WAIT, SERPICO, PLEASE ...!
HEY.
THERE'S NO HARM IN AT LEAST TELLING US THE REASON, IS THERE?

THERE IS NOTHING FOR ME TO SAY ON THIS MATTER.
I WANTED TO TRY HAVIN' A FIGHT WITH YOU AGAIN.
THAT...
...MOTIVATION NO LONGER EXISTS.

*TMP TMP
SO, NOW WHAT?
SHHH
IT IS NO USE.
HER MIND IS CLOSED, OR RATHER, IT SEEMS THAT FARNESE HAS UNTIED MY HAIR... NOW THOUGHT TRANSFERENCE WILL NOT REACH HER.
ポコ ポコ
WHAT GIVES...? WE'VE ALL CHEATED DEATH TOGETHER **SO** MUCH, AND IN THE END IT'S A SCRAP OF PAPER AND "HAVE A NICE LIFE"? THIS'S WHY I CAN'T STAND ARISTOCRATS.
BUT, AH WELL.
PEOPLLLE ARE AS COLLLD AS IIICE. ♪ ♪
I THINK...
...THERE ARE SOME CIRCUMSTANCES THEY CANNOT DISCUSS.
WHEN I TOUCHED SERPICO'S HAND FOR AN INSTANT...
...A VISION OF FARNESE'S SAD FACE CAME ACROSS. AND, SERPICO'S PERPLEXITY...
THIS IS JUST **SO** ODD! FARNESE WAS SO ZEALOUS ABOUT STUDYING MAGIC!
...AND TAKING CARE OF CASCA! SO TO SUDDENLY DO THIS...

BLASH
AHH! I CAN'T TAKE MY EYES OFF HER FOR A SECOND!
......
IT AIN'T LIKE ME TO POKE MY HEAD INTO...
...PEOPLE'S AFFAIRS, BUT...
THIS DEFINITELY...
...DOESN'T SEEM RIGHT.
HEY, SHORT-STUFFS.
HEY! WHAT'S WITH THE PLURAL?!
I'VE GOT A FAVOR TO ASK. IT'S AN ELF-ONLY JOB.

ガラ *CLATA
ガラ *CLATA
ガラ *CLATA
ガラ *CLATA
……
ワク ワク ワク *FX: (excitement)
ワク ワク ワク
THIS IS KINDA WILD... "ARISTOCRATIC STATELY MANSION INFILTRATION REPORT."
JUST DON'T HAVE *TOO* MUCH FUN.
AND *DON'T* LOSE SIGHT OF HIM.
ROGER!

WHEWWW. I'M STUUUFFED. AHHH, CELEBRITY LIFE. ♡
THE DINNER SWEETS ...?!
BUT WE LOST SIGHT OF SERPY... -URP-
TH-THAT'S RIGHT!
HOW CAN YOU JUST EAT 'N' SLEEP?! GET IT TOGETHER! THIS IS SERIOUS BUSINESS!
*ULLP
HM?
STOP THA-- -URLP-
THERE GOES FARNESE!
WELL! WHO'S SHE THINK SHE IS, DRESSED UP LIKE A PRINCESS?! SHE'S JUST A SERVANT! MINE!
*YULP

*FX: BONK

HHHH
THERE YOU ARE, FARNESE. EXCELLENT.
BROTHER.
I'M PLEASED YOU ACCEPTED MY REQUEST.
NO NEED TO WORRY, I WON'T STEER YOU WRONG.
....
GO ON AND INTRODUCE YOURSELF...
...MY OLD FRIEND.
!

IT IS A PLEASURE TO MEET YOU, FARNESE DO VANDIMION.
I AM *RODERICK OF SCHTAUFFEN*...
...AN OFFICER OF THE *11TH* NAVY.

....
GREET HIM.
HE'S YOUR FIANCÉ.
LIFT
I WOULD BE HONORED IF YOU WOULD CALL ME RODERICK...
...LADY FARNESE.
HOW DO YOU DO, *RODERICK*...
THEN LIKEWISE, CALL ME *FARNESE*...
WH-WHOA WHOA WHOA WHOOOA!!
WHAT THE HELL IS *THIS?!*
*SHAKE SHAKE

RODERICK IS AN OLD FRIEND FROM MY COLLEGE DAYS. HE'S THIRD IN LINE TO THE ROYAL THRONE OF IITH AND A SHIP'S CAPTAIN IN THE IITH NAVY.
I HAVE HEARD MUCH ABOUT YOU FROM YOUR BROTHER.
ABOUT THE VANDIMION DEVIL CHILD...
...AND THE WANDERING PRINCESS.
UH, RODERICK.
THAT'S KIND OF ABRUPT...
YES.
THAT IS CORRECT.
HM...
*AHAHAHAHAH
?

YOU ARE INTERESTING.
*CLASP
LOOK AROUND, FARNESE...
コホン.
*AHEM
...AT THE ROSES SPREAD THROUGHOUT THIS GREENHOUSE.
RODERICK'S GIVEN THEM ALL TO YOU.

ALL THESE...
THAT'S INCREDIBLE...
IT WAS A BIT OF AN EFFORT, MAKING IT WORTHY OF THE DAUGHTER OF THE ESTEEMED VANDIMION FAMILY...
...BUT DO THEY PLEASE YOU?
THEY DO.
THANK YOU VERY MUCH, RODERICK.
OH YEAH?!
WELLLL, YOU MAKE FOR QUITE THE PICTURE, SURROUNDED BY ROSES!
BUT YOU KNOW...
...FOR MY PART, I JUST...
*SCRATCH
ポリ
...CAN'T BRING MYSELF TO LIKE ROSES.
OY...
...
D'YOU WANT TO BE LIKED OR HATED?
ROSES ARE SAID TO BE LADIES AMONG FLOWERS.
A SYMBOL OF EVIDENT NOBILITY, THEY BLOOM FULLY AND HAUGHTILY.
ALL OTHER FLOWERS LOOK LIKE MERE WINDOW DRESSING.
YES.
INDEED, JUST LIKE NOBLE WOMEN.
COMPETING THROUGH DRESS AND SHOWINESS...
...INSIDE THE GREENHOUSE THAT IS NOBLE RANK.

BUT EVEN WHEN ROSES...
...ARE GATHERED BY THE HUNDRED OR THE THOUSAND, YOU CAN'T TELL ONE FROM THE NEXT.
THESE ROSES...
...ARE A FITTING ADORNMENT FOR YOU.
A WHITE LILY OF THE FIELD, WHICH SCATTERS NOT...
...EVEN WHEN STRUCK BY A STRONG WIND.

....
Y'KNOW WHAT THIS IS?!
IT'S A *SCANDAL* !!
*KRNCH
パパリッ
ポテチ
*POTATO CHIPS
THIS JUST WON'T DO!
WE'RE OUTTA HERE!
I GOT GOSSIP TA SPREAD!
WE GOTTA LET EVERYONE KNOW!
*ZHMM
....

FARNY?
ENGAGED?!
WHAT THE HECK?
IS IT TRUE, IVALERA?
YOU BET IT IS! WE JUST GOT A LOAD OF THE GUY!
"THESE ROSES ARE A FITTING ADORNMENT FOR YOU"...
....HE SAID, OR SOME JUNK.
SOOOO SMUG!
ポポポ
*FX: BOP BOP BOP
BUT IT FELT SO NATURAL AND BOURGEOIS. FARNESE DIDN'T LOOK ALL THAT UNHAPPY.♡
YOU MEAN IF SHE MARRIES HIM, SHE WON'T BE ABLE TO TRAVEL WITH US ANYMORE?
WELL, IT JUST MIGHT MEAN THAT.
THEN SHE COULDA JUST SAID SO, INSTEAD OF RUNNIN' OFF ALL OF A SUDDEN.
TALK ABOUT COLD.
I'M SURE BEIN' FRIENDS WITH A MONKEY LIKE YOU IS EMBARRASSIN' FOR AN ARISTOCRAT.
NOT TO MENTION WITH WEIRD INSECTS LIKE YOU.
I BEG YOUR PARDON?!
I THINK IT IS OTHERWISE.

FARNESE'S WISH TO LEARN MAGIC WAS GENUINE.
AND SHE TREASURED HER SILVER KNIFE SO MUCH...
SHE WAS ALSO THE PERSON TO WHOM CASCA WAS MOST ATTACHED.
*PWEEE スピュー
*PSHT しゅっ
I AM QUITE UNABLE TO LOOK AFTER HER AS FARNESE DID.
BUT STILL, SHE SENT BACK THE SILVER KNIFE AND ALL.
ISN'T STUDYIN' MAGIC SOMETHIN' AN ARISTOCRAT GIRL WOULD JUST FALL INTO ON A WHIM?
IT'S THE *OPPOSITE.*
UH OH.
YOU REALLY *DO* TALK TOO MUCH.
YEAH.

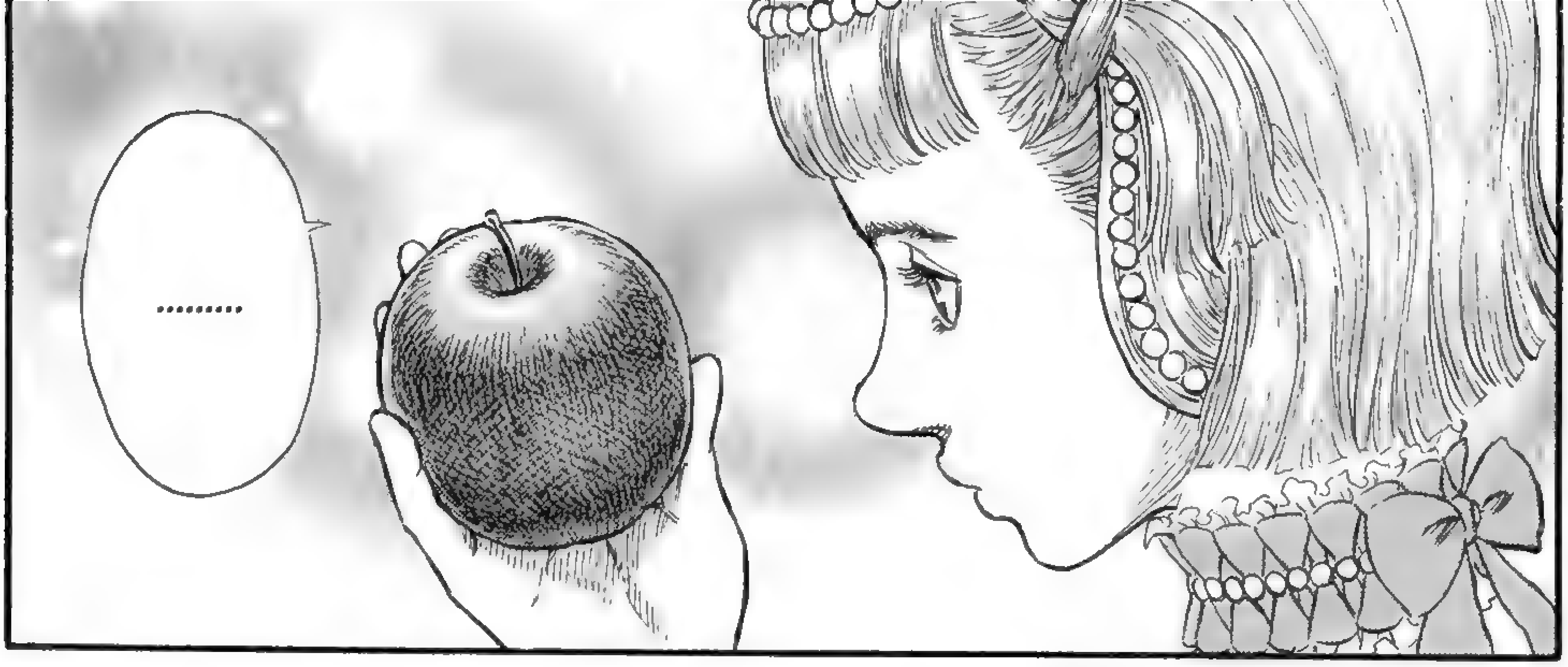
AS COLLATERAL FOR GETTING A SHIP...
...AN ENGAGEMENT WAS SUGGESTED TO HER.
OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
Y-YES, RIGHT!
THAT WOULD MAKE SENSE!
GOOD CALL.
ARISTOCRATIC POLITICAL MARRIAGES ARE PRETTY MUCH A MATTER OF COURSE.
ESPECIALLY FOR HER, A DAUGHTER OF NOBLES WITH SUCH A HIGH REPUTATION. I COMPLETELY FORGOT ABOUT THAT ...
SO... WHADDA WE DO?
....
IT'S WHAT SHE DECIDED HERSELF.
...OR SO I'D LIKE TO THINK.

oooo
*DROP
ポロ…
AH!
コロコロ
*ROLL ROLL
OH MAAAAN ...
......
パチ
*SNAP
THAT SETTLES IT.
IF THE PRICE FOR A SHIP IS CASCA'S BABY-SITTER AND GOOD FOOD...
...IT JUST AIN'T MUCH OF A DEAL.

MOTHER 母

BERSERK

A...
...LITTLE MORE...
......!!
IT FEELS LIKE...
...I'M SO CLOSE.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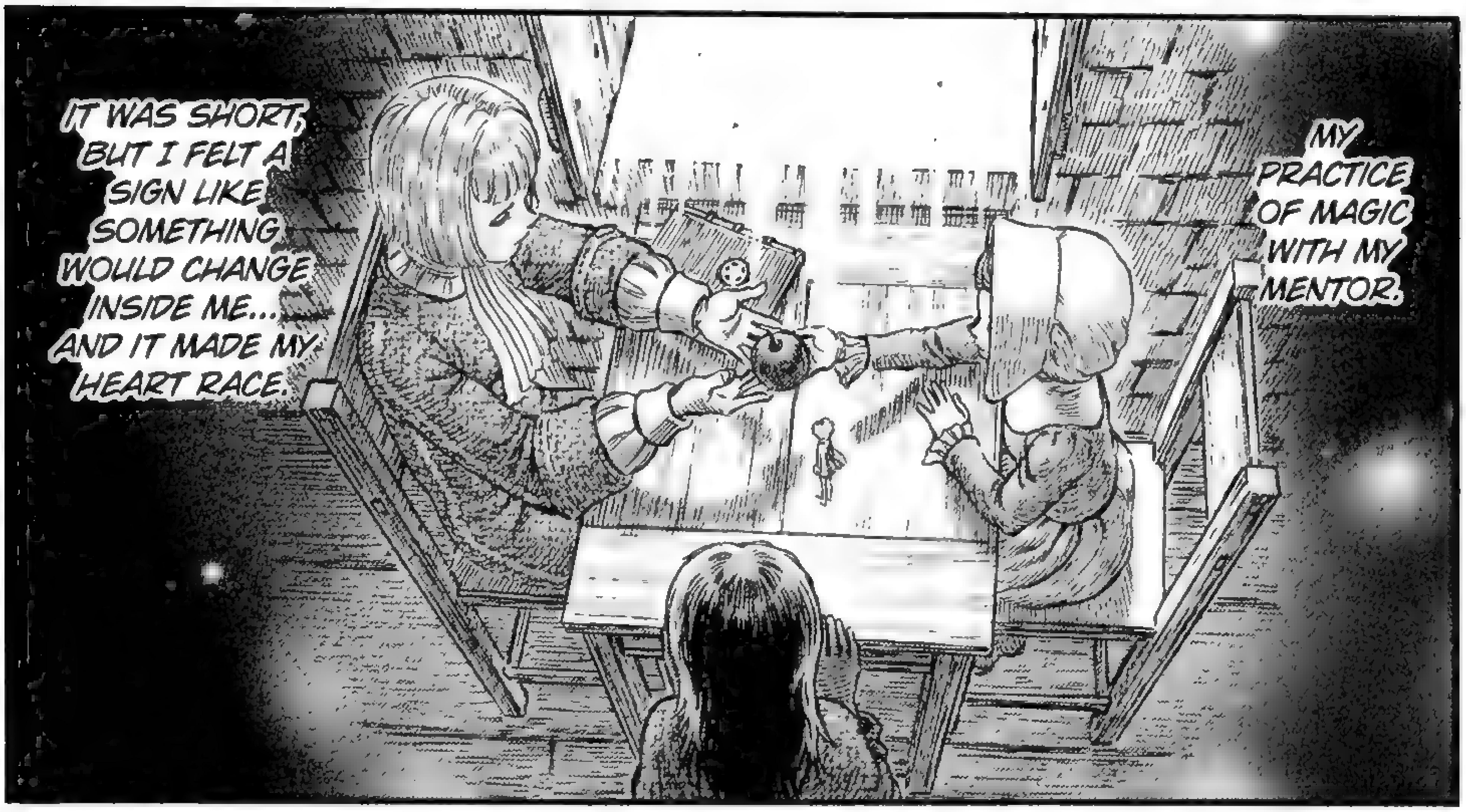
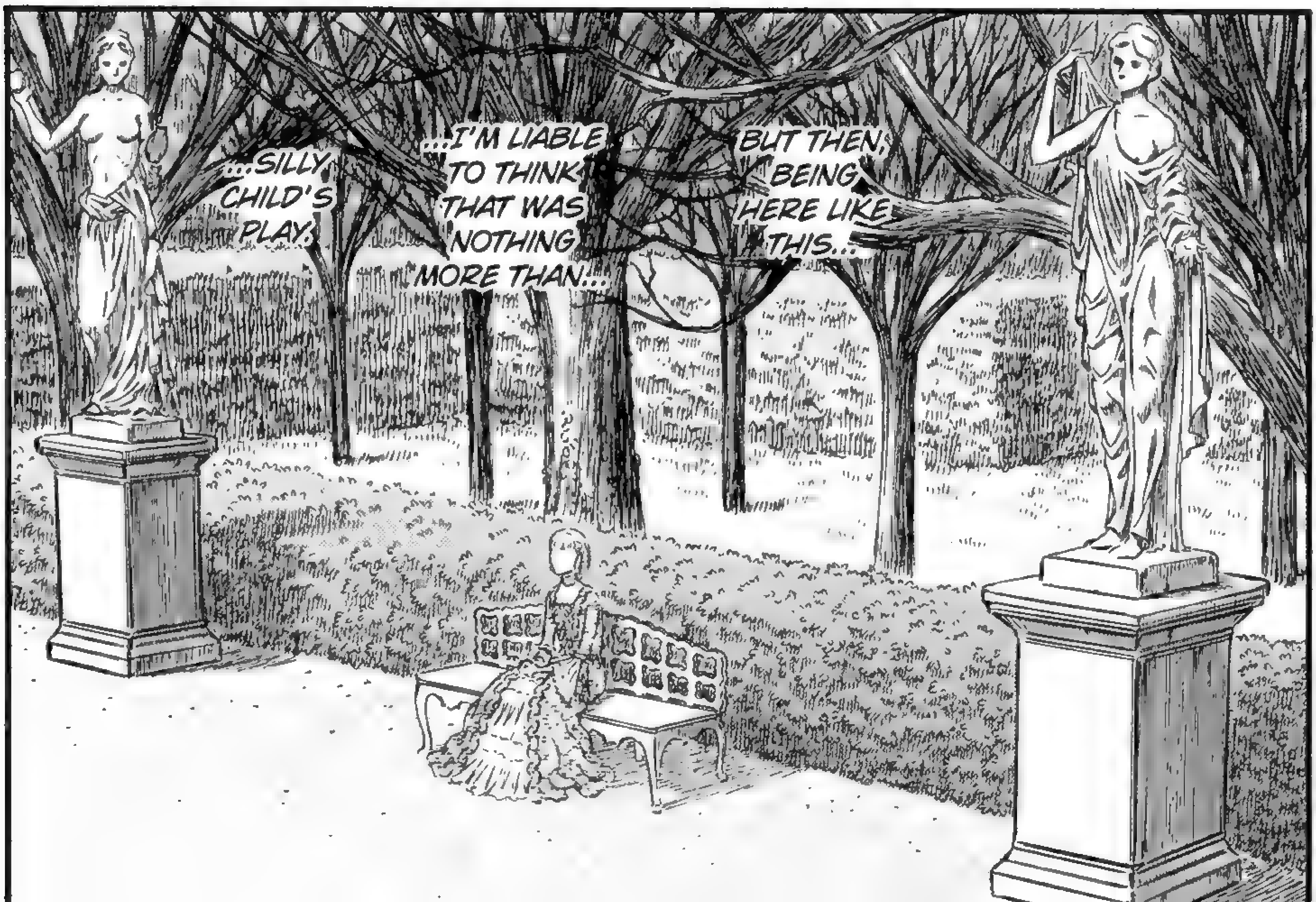

MY PRACTICE OF MAGIC WITH MY MENTOR.
IT WAS SHORT, BUT I FELT A SIGN LIKE SOMETHING WOULD CHANGE INSIDE ME... AND IT MADE MY HEART RACE.


BUT THEN, BEING HERE LIKE THIS...
...I'M LIABLE TO THINK THAT WAS NOTHING MORE THAN...
...SILLY CHILD'S PLAY.

*FX: HYRRRRLL

*FX: ROLL

ウゥゥゥゥ
ウ ウ
コロ コロ
YOU WILL CATCH COLD...
...LADY FARNESE.
HERE IT IS ALREADY. SPRING.
YET THE SNOW LINGERS.
......
BEING WITH YOU...
...IN THIS PLACE, THE SNOW FALLING ON US...
IT FEELS JUST LIKE BEING IN THAT MINIATURE GARDEN IN THE HOLY CITY.

AS IF THAT JOURNEY...
...AS IF THE FEELINGS I FELT ON THAT STRANGE JOURNEY...
...WERE ALL A DREAM...
....
I...
...WANTED TO BE USEFUL.
BY DOING SOMETHING...
...NOBODY BUT *I* COULD DO.
I WANTED TO BE HELPFUL...
...TO ALL OF THEM.

BUT...
I'M SURE THAT WAS...
...AN EXCUSE.
I WAS UNABLE TO STAY THERE...
...AT THAT FIRESIDE CIRCLE OF LIGHT, GIVEN TO ME SO UNEXPECTEDLY.
THERE WAS WARMTH...
...YET I COULD OFFER IT NOTHING IN RETURN.
THE WARMER IT GOT...
...THE MORE I THOUGHT...
...I MIGHT HAVE A PLACE THERE.
BUT I COULDN'T STAY...
...AND IN MY ANXIETY...
...I RAN BACK HOME.
HERE, WHERE I'M ACCUSTOMED.
COLD...
...AND ENCLOSED.

I'M...
...A COWARD...
...AND A FOOL.
LADY FARNESE...
*MURMUR
ザワ
ザワ
IT'S...

...MOTHER.
SO...
FARNESE.

YOU'RE LOOKING WELL, AFTER SO LONG.
AS ARE YOU, MOTHER.
WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE?
AS I CAN'T ABIDE THE COLD, DURING THE WINTER I WAS SAILING ABOUT THE SOUTHERN ISLANDS.
I THOUGHT I WOULD COMPLETE MY TRIP BY TAKING IN A BATTLEFIELD.
AND HOW NICE THAT THE ARMIES ARE SO HEROIC AND FULL OF STALWART SOLDIERS. ♡
OH, SPEAKING OF WHICH...
DIDN'T YOU STEAL AWAY FROM YOUR HOLY KNIGHTS AND GO MISSING...?
WHAT BRINGS *YOU* HERE?
......
WELL...
MUCH HAS HAPPENED.
OH, MY.
BETROTHED?
YOU?

WHO IS HE?
A ROYAL GENTLEMAN WHO IS AN OLD SCHOOL FRIEND OF MANIFICO.
DOES YOUR FATHER KNOW?
MANIFICO SAID HE WOULD AT SOME POINT FIND A CHANCE TO TELL HIM...
HMPH.
I SWEAR.
WHEN IT COMES TO VANDIMION MEN...
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT WITH THIS?
DOES IT SEEM YOU'LL GET ON WELL WITH HIM?
HE...
...KINDLY USED THE WORD...
"INTERESTING"...
...TO DESCRIBE ME.

DO YOU...
...HAVE ANY MAN OF WHOM YOU'RE FOND?
!
I...
WELL...
NO...
TO ME, HE'S...
......
YOU'RE OUT OF SORTS, SOMEHOW.
YOU DON'T SEEM LIKE THAT DAUGHTER WHO HAD THE HEAD OF THE VANDIMION FAMILY AT A LOSS.

BUT I NEVER...
OH, YOU DIDN'T KNOW?
YOUR FATHER...
...**FEARS** YOU.
HUH...?
YOU SEE...
...HE'S **WEAK.**
FATHER IS?
***HIM*...?**
YES.
HE'S WEAK...
SO HE WANTS...
...EVERYTHING SITUATED WHERE HE CAN HANDLE IT.

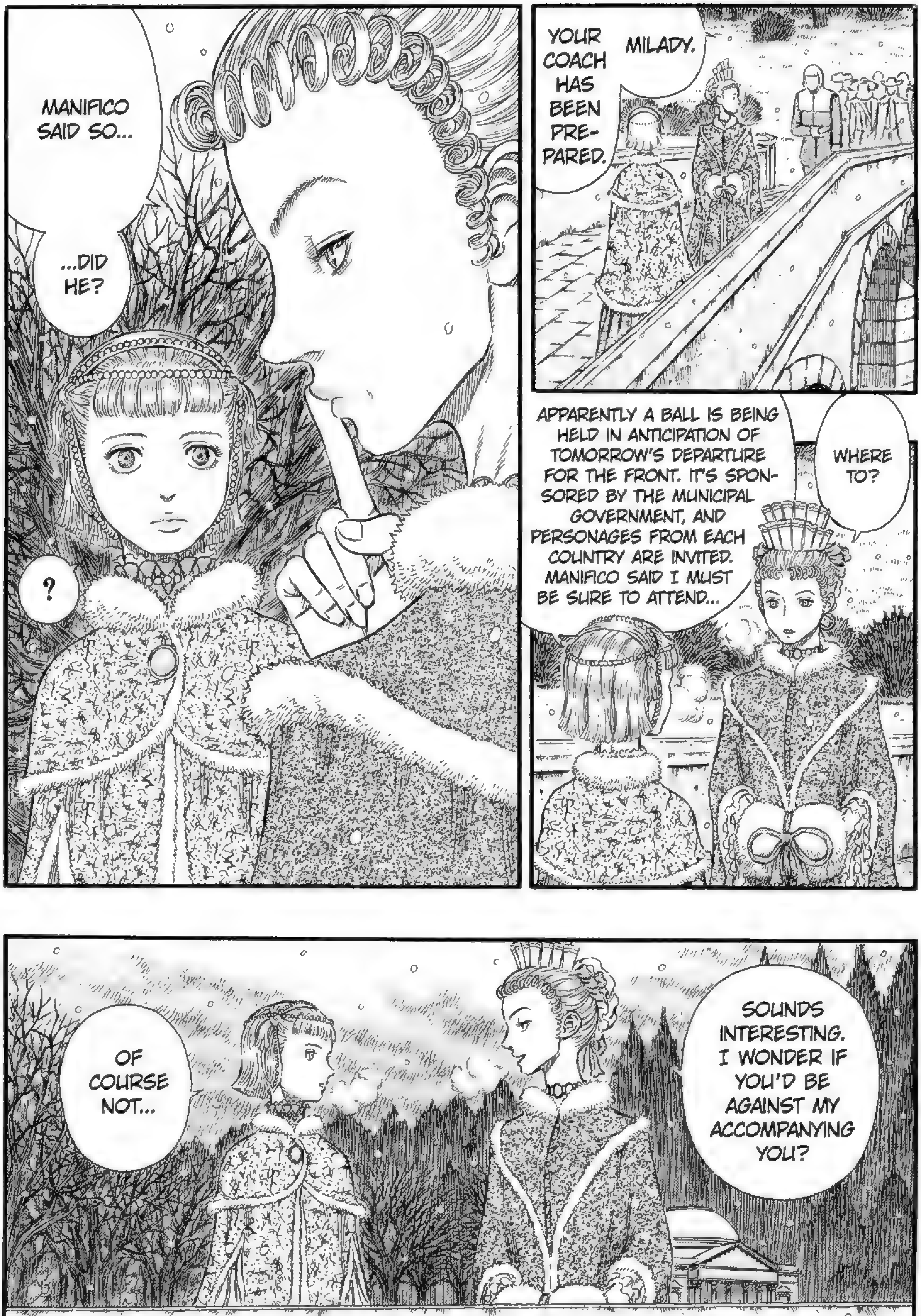
HE MOVES PEOPLE AND THINGS ALL THROUGHOUT THE WORLD LIKE THEY WERE TOYS, AND ONCE EVERYTHING IS ARRANGED ACCORDING TO HIS OWN **SCHEMES,** HE FINALLY RELAXES.
IN MY EYES, **HE** IS SLAVE TO THE WORLD. WELL, I SUPPOSE IF HE WASN'T SO ABNORMAL, HE WOULDN'T BE CUT OUT TO BE THE VANDIMION HEAD.
TO SOMEONE LIKE HIM...
...YOU'RE AN **ENIGMA.**
A LITTLE **MONSTER.**
I AM...?
TO FATHER...?
THAT...
THAT **CANNOT** BE!

I...
...NEVER COULD...
...SAY ONE WORD...
...TO FATHER ABOUT...
...MY OWN FEELINGS.
I NEVER COULD DO MORE THAN...
...NOD AT WHATEVER HE SAID...
NEVER...
THE USE OF WORDS...
...IS NOT ALL THERE IS TO COMMUNICATING FEELINGS...
FARNESE...

YOU'VE ALWAYS...
...EXPRESSED YOUR UNUTTERABLE, REPRESSED FEELINGS THROUGH THE MOST UNEXPECTED BEHAVIOR.
LIKE A BABY, WITHOUT SPEECH...
...CRYING AND SHOUTING FOR ALL IT'S WORTH.

YOUR FATHER FEARED YOU FOR THAT.
HE HASN'T THE STRENGTH TO ACCEPT THINGS HE DOESN'T COMPREHEND.
....
YOU WERE RAISED ALL ALONE, LIKE SOME BEAST OF THE FIELD, NEVER EXPERIENCING A PARENT'S WARMTH OR THE WORLD OF MAN.
AND SO YOUR HEART IS NAKED, NOT CLAD IN ANY SHELL.
WHEN IT COMES TO YOUR FEELINGS, YOU ARE ARTISTIC...
SO MUCH SO THAT YOU CAN'T ABIDE THIS WORLD.

BUT YOU KNOW...
IF YOU WERE ABLE TO FIND A PLACE FOR YOURSELF SOMEWHERE...
...THEN YOU, MORE FAMILIAR WITH PAIN THAN MOST...
...COULD PROBABLY COME TO BE KINDER THAN ANYONE ELSE.
MOTHER...
I DON'T EXACTLY REMEMBER RAISING YOU AS SUCH...
BUT AS A MOTHER, I'M PROUD TO HAVE A DAUGHTER LIKE YOU.
PERHAPS YOU HAD ME AS A BAD EXAMPLE FROM WHICH TO LEARN?
WHAT A THING TO SAY...


MILADY.
YOUR COACH HAS BEEN PREPARED.
WHERE TO?
APPARENTLY A BALL IS BEING HELD IN ANTICIPATION OF TOMORROW'S DEPARTURE FOR THE FRONT. IT'S SPONSORED BY THE MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT, AND PERSONAGES FROM EACH COUNTRY ARE INVITED. MANIFICO SAID I MUST BE SURE TO ATTEND...
MANIFICO SAID SO...
...DID HE?
?
SOUNDS INTERESTING. I WONDER IF YOU'D BE AGAINST MY ACCOMPANYING YOU?
OF COURSE NOT...

MAN... NOTHIN' BUT WALLS!
IS THIS *WHOLE* THING FARNY'S PLACE? TOO MUCH SPACE...
SO WHADDA WE DO?
JUST WAIT FOR IT TO GET DARK AND--
WE'LL WALK RIGHT IN.
!
YEAH, BUT...
WE'LL JUST GO AND SEE HER.
THERE'S NOTHIN' TO BE ASHAMED OF, REALLY.

IF THAT'S NO GO, WE'LL DEAL WITH IT THEN.
I GOT A FEELIN' THIS'LL MEAN TROUBLE...
ANY-WAY...
WHY'D WE BRING CASCA ALONG?
AND *YOU*, WITH THAT OUTFIT OF YOURS...
WE COULD ***NEVER*** LEAVE CASCA BY HERSELF AT THE INN.
WELL, YEAH, THAT'S TRUE.
AND SHE'LL BE BAIT TO LURE FARNY BACK.
THE NEED FOR MAGIC MAY ALSO ARISE.
IN THAT CASE, IT IS EASIER TO FOCUS THIS WAY.
YUP, WITCHES ARE AS WITCHES WEAR. ♡
BESIDES, I WANT THINGS TO RETURN TO THE WAY THEY WERE, AND QUICKLY.

ガラガラ
*CLATA CLATA
HM?
I'LL SAY...
!
ガガガガガ
*BRBMMM

THE BALL
舞踏会

BERSERK

GRAND GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF THE HOLY SEE REALM, AND RECOGNIZED AS THE LEADING CANDIDATE FOR THE NEXT PONTIFF.
POLIZIANO DO VANDIMION.
JOINT MANAGER OF THE *VANDIMION BANK,* FATHER'S RIGHT-HAND MAN, AND IN REALITY THE NEXT HEAD OF THE VANDIMION FAMILY.
GIORGIO DO VANDIMION.
BUT THERE ARE MANY NATIONS THAT WOULD GET NOWHERE WERE IT NOT FOR VANDIMION BACKING.
THIS WAR WILL BE NO EXCEPTION.

EVERY LAST ONE OF THEM...
...IS DESPERATE TO BE IN FAVOR WITH THE NEXT TYRANT.
YOU SWINE!!
WHOCK
CONSPIRING WITH *CHUDER*, OF ALL PLACES...
HAVE YOU NO *SHAME*?!
WHO ARE THEY?
AHH.
LORDS OF MIDLAND.

THE PUBLIC REASON FOR THIS WAR IS TO RECAPTURE HOLY SEE TERRITORY FROM THE KUSHAN INVASION, BUT EACH NATION'S TRUE MOTIVE IS TO CARVE MIDLAND'S DOMAIN INTO AS MANY PIECES AS POSSIBLE.
EVEN IF THE KUSHAN ARE REPELLED, IT'S OBVIOUS THAT EACH NATION'S ARMY WILL BY NO MEANS SHY AWAY FROM REMAINING THERE.
AND NOW, WITH NO KINGDOM, HOW WILL *THEY* REGAIN THEIR TERRITORIES?
TO THAT END, WHAT COUNTRY, WHAT POWER, WILL THEY SIDE WITH?
THAT'S WHERE THEIR THOUGHTS LIE.
IF THEY CONDUCT THEMSELVES WELL, THEY MIGHT AT LEAST PROCURE THE POSITION OF REGIONAL GOVERNOR-GENERAL.
PLEASE, DESIST FROM THIS!!
BOTH OF YOU...!
*FX: WHACK
STOP IT!!
ARGHH!!
UNHAND ME!!

I WOULD HAVE YOU...
...STOP AIRING THE SHAME OF OUR KINGDOM IN PUBLIC!!
....
SIR OWEN.
DIDN'T WE NOBLES EACH COME TO THIS PLACE IN SEARCH OF ASSISTANCE?
CERTAINLY.
BUT FROM WHOM I MEAN TO ASK ASSISTANCE IS NOT SOME RANDOM ARISTOCRAT OR ROYALTY.

IT IS ALL OF YOU.
YOU MIDLAND LORDS.
....
AS A NOBLEMAN, I UNDERSTAND THAT YOU PLACE ABOVE ALL THE RELIEF OF YOUR TERRITORIES AND SUBJECTS.
HOWEVER, AT A TIME LIKE THIS, MORE THAN EVER, AS MIDLANDERS WE MUST BIND TOGETHER OUR STRENGTH IN ORDER TO RECLAIM OUR KINGDOM...
THAT IS...
...IF THE ROYAL FAMILY LIVES.
MIDLAND IS AN ANCIENT KINGDOM. THEREFORE AS NOBLES, TO US THE ROYAL BLOODLINE IS SACRED, A PEERLESS FOCUS OF OUR LOYALTY.
TO US, THE ROYAL FAMILY IS THE KINGDOM ITSELF.
NOW, WITH NO ROYAL FAMILY, MIDLAND IS...
...AN UNFULFILLED DREAM...
....

SUCH A SAD THING, THE SUBJECTS OF A DEAD KING...
SIR LABAN, WHERE ARE YOU NOW...? DID YOU MANAGE TO SAFELY INFILTRATE WINDHAM?
WHAT OF PRINCESS CHARLOTTE'S SAFETY...?
I CAN DO NOTHING FOR YOU...
...AND IT STINGS.
....
KNIGHTS OF A DEAD KINGDOM...
WHAT A MISERABLE THOUGHT.

SPEAKING AS ONE DESPAIRED BY HIS OWN COUNTRY...
...MY HAT'S OFF TO THEM.
AND AS ONE DESPAIRED BY HIS OWN FAMILY, I SAY THE SAME.
BUT WE'RE YOUNG, AND WE'LL NEVER SPEND OUR...
...REMAINING YEARS LIVING IN SUCH IDLENESS.
GO ON AND SCRABBLE.
DRINK STALE WINE TOGETHER TO YOUR DELIGHT...
...IN THIS BIRDCAGE...
...YOU CALL THE WORLD.

WHAT'S TO COME IS NOT AN AGE OF THE GENTLE, FULLY MAPPED INLAND SEAS...
...BUT OF THE RAGING, OPEN OCEAN.
HE WHO OPENS THE UNKNOWN SEA ROUTES AND SETS FOOT UPON UNEXPLORED LANDS...
HE WHO CONQUERS *THOSE* WILL BE THE CONQUEROR OF THE AGE.
NEITHER MY FATHER NOR MY SUBJECTS ACTUALLY UNDERSTAND THAT POINT.
IITH, ON THE NORTHERN FRONTIER, SURROUNDED BY OCEAN, HAS, UNLIKE OTHER PRINCIPALITIES, BUILT UP A HISTORY OF SHIPBUILDING, SEAFARING, AND A REFUSAL TO YIELD TO THE ROUGH SEA. PAYING NO MIND TO THAT SUPERIORITY, THEIR INSULARISM MAKES THEM LOATHE THE INTERVENTION OF OTHER NATIONS, AND THEY THINK OF NOTHING BUT SECLUSION.
MY FATHER IS THE SAME. HE DISPLAYS INTEREST IN NOTHING BEYOND...
...HOW TO MOVE AND REARRANGE PIECES ON HIS LIMITED CHESSBOARD.
WE TWO, ALIENATED BY FAMILY AND ABANDONED BY NATION...
...ARE FORLORN FELLOWS IN THIS CAGED WORLD.

IF WE'RE TO WANDER FORLORN...
...WE'LL JUST PUT TO SEA.
WE WILL SEIZE THE COMING AGE.
BROTHER.
OUR BOND, THE GODDESS OF VICTORY, ARRIVES.

NO MATTER WHAT FATHER MAY SAY, WE'RE IN PUBLIC. ONCE THIS BETROTHAL IS OFFICIALLY ANNOUNCED...
...HE WON'T BE ABLE TO CANCEL IT ON PERIL OF HIS HONOR AS FAMILY HEAD. ONCE THAT'S DONE, NOT ONLY YOU AND I, BUT VANDIMION AND IITH WILL BE...
HOLD THAT THOUGHT, MANIFICO.
I LIKE THAT SIDE OF YOU...
BUT FOR NOW...
...ENOUGH INELEGANT TALK.

I'VE LOOKED FORWARD TO SEEING YOU, MY PRINCESS.
I WONDER IF I MAY REQUEST THE FIRST DANCE WITH YOU?
Y-YOU MAY...
MY, MY, NEVER CEASING TO AMAZE...
WHAT A SUPERB GENTLEMAN.

WON'T YOU INTRODUCE ME, TOO...
...MANIFICO?
MOTHER ...!
WHEN DID YOU GET HERE?
I JUST ARRIVED TODAY.
THAT WAS YOUR FRIEND, FARNESE'S FIANCÉ?
HE'S QUITE NICE, THOUGH A BIT MISCHIEVOUS LOOKING.
M-MOTHER!
WHERE DID YOU HEAR THAT...?!
OH, YOU KNOW.
IT COULDN'T HAVE BEEN FROM FATHER...?
OH.
IS IT SOMETHING HE SHOULD NOT KNOW?

MOTHER ...!!
ホホホホホ
*SNAP
パチ
YOUR BLOOD IS UNDENIABLE.
YOU'VE GRADUALLY BECOME MORE AND MORE LIKE YOUR FATHER IN HIS YOUTH.
HARDLY ...
PLEASE STOP TEASING.
LISTEN TO SOME ADVICE.
BE CAREFUL OF HER WHEN SHE'S OBEYING WHAT SOMEONE SAYS.
ESPECIALLY WHEN SHE SEEMS SUBMISSIVE.

*FX: HO HO HO HO HO

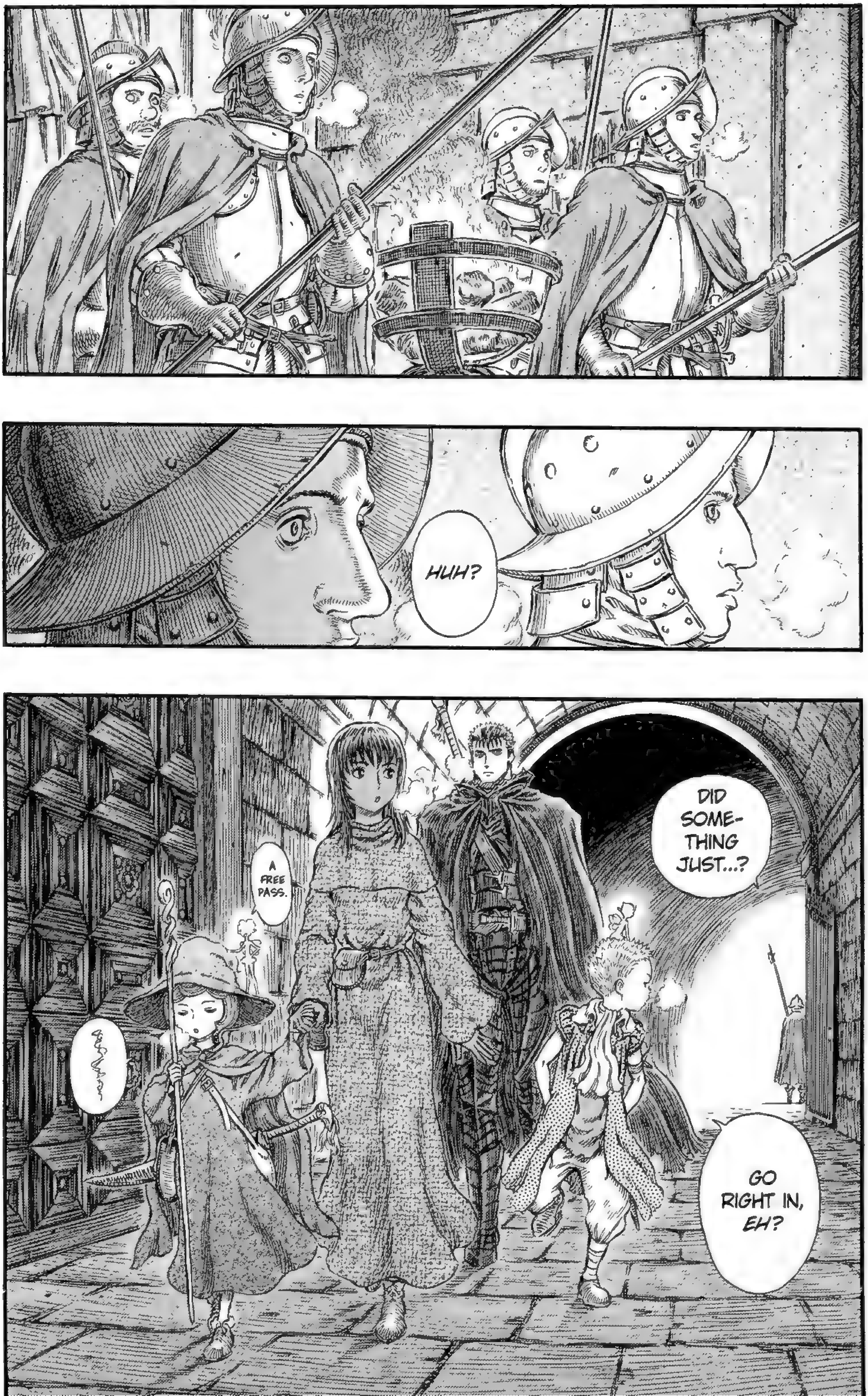
SHE'S NOT THE KIND OF WOMAN WHO'S...
...AT PEACE WITHIN THE SCHEMES OF MEN.
WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO--
YOU'LL BE SORRY IF YOU DON'T LISTEN.
JUST LIKE YOUR FATHER.
....

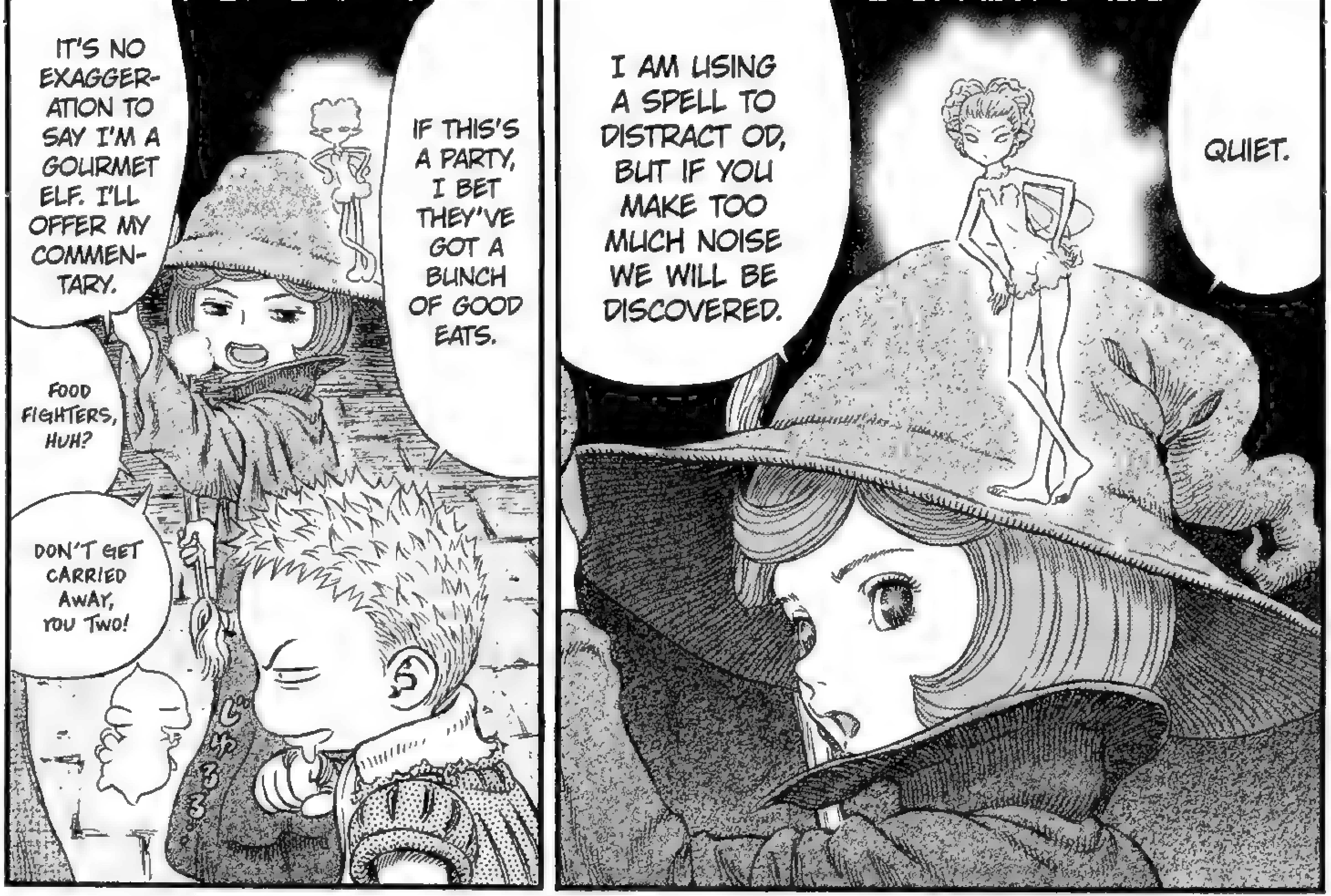
YOU'RE FARNESE'S SERVANT, UM...
I AM SERPICO, MADAM.
YES, I REMEMBER NOW.
IT'S BEEN SOME TIME SINCE YOU CAME TO THE ESTATE.
IT HAS BEEN OVER TEN YEARS.
MY LIFE WAS SAVED BY LADY FARNESE AT A YOUNG AGE. DUE TO THAT, I RECEIVED THE HONOR OF BEING BY HER SIDE.
MORE THAN A DECADE ALONGSIDE FARNESE...
REALLY.
THEN YOU MUST BE FAIRLY WARPED AS WELL.

SUCH COMPANIONS CANNOT BE SEPARATED...
...BECAUSE THEY CANNOT STAND WITHOUT ENTWINING AGAINST EACH OTHER, JUST LIKE A PAIR OF TREES.
YOU WILL CONTINUE TO LOOK AFTER HER, THEN.
HOW LOVELY, THE SCENT OF THE FORBIDDEN.
....
SHE IS QUITE ASTUTE.
AGAIN?

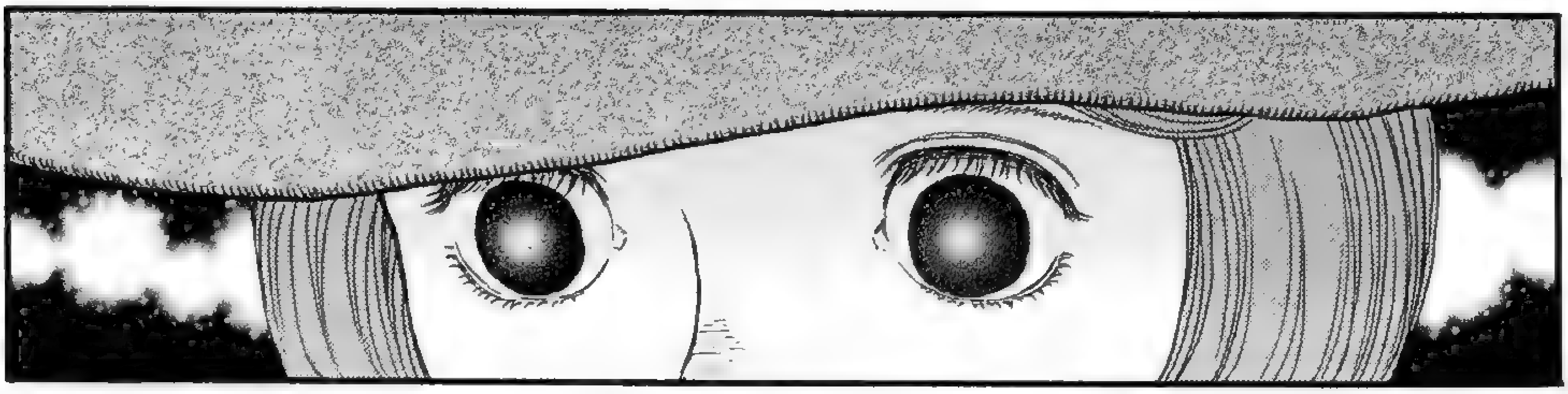
HNNN... IT'S COLD.
LOOKS LIKE THE SNOW'S STOPPED.
I WANNA GO INSIDE.
HM?
HALT!
WHO GOES ?!
HERE IT IS!
I BEG YOUR PARDON, BUT YOU WILL ALLOW US TO PASS.
PEOPLE WE KNOW'RE HERE! WE'VE COME FOR THE PARTY!
GOOOOD NIGHT SHIFT!

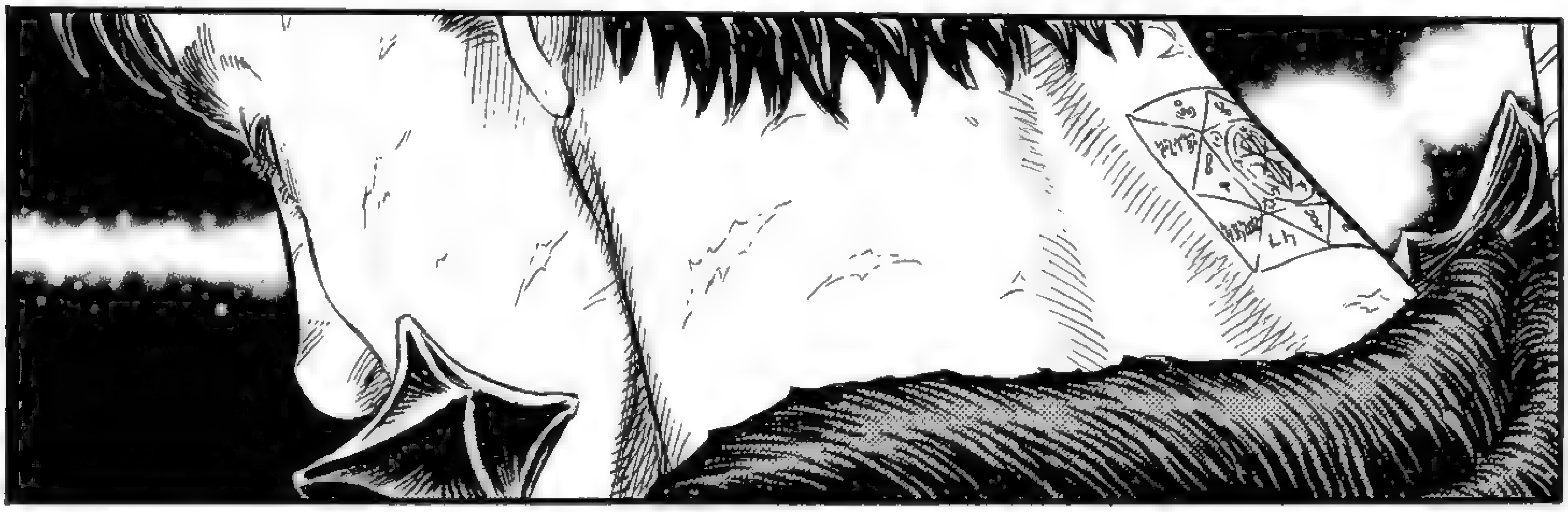
列柱の間 THE COLONNADE CHAMBER


HUH?
DID SOMETHING JUST...?
GO RIGHT IN, EH?
A FREE PASS.

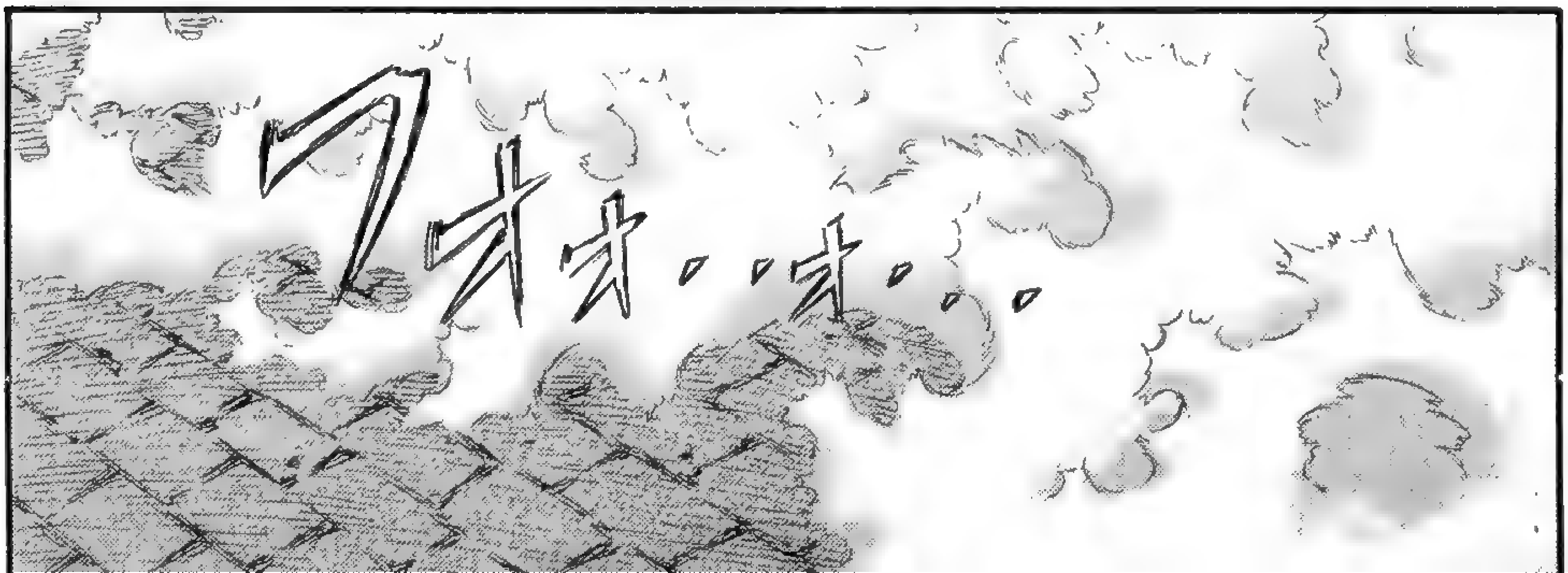

QUIET.
I AM USING A SPELL TO DISTRACT OD, BUT IF YOU MAKE TOO MUCH NOISE WE WILL BE DISCOVERED.
IF THIS'S A PARTY, I BET THEY'VE GOT A BUNCH OF GOOD EATS.
IT'S NO EXAGGERATION TO SAY I'M A GOURMET ELF. I'LL OFFER MY COMMENTARY.
FOOD FIGHTERS, HUH?
DON'T GET CARRIED AWAY, YOU TWO!

*FX: SLRRRP



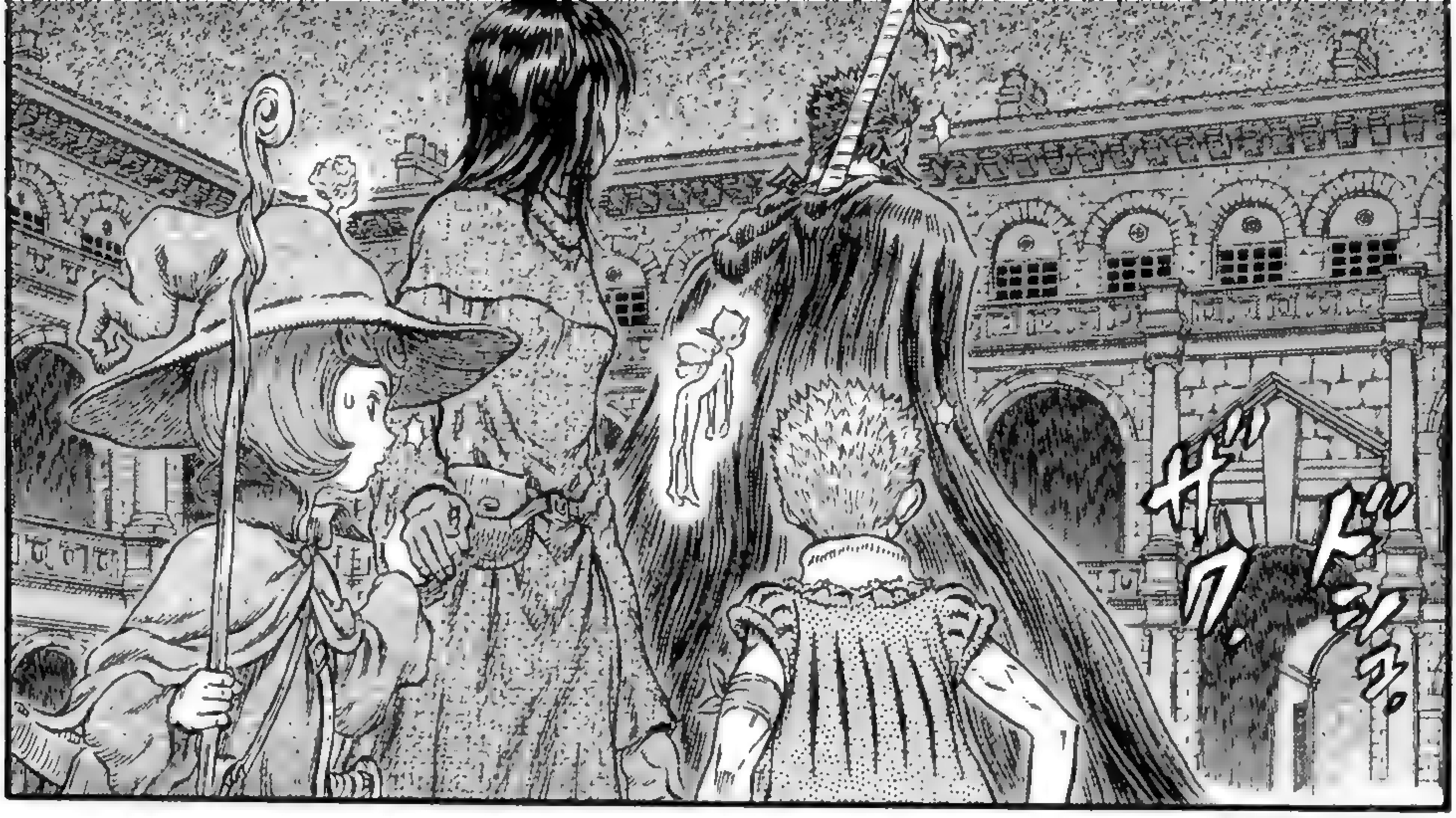


*FX: FWOOOS



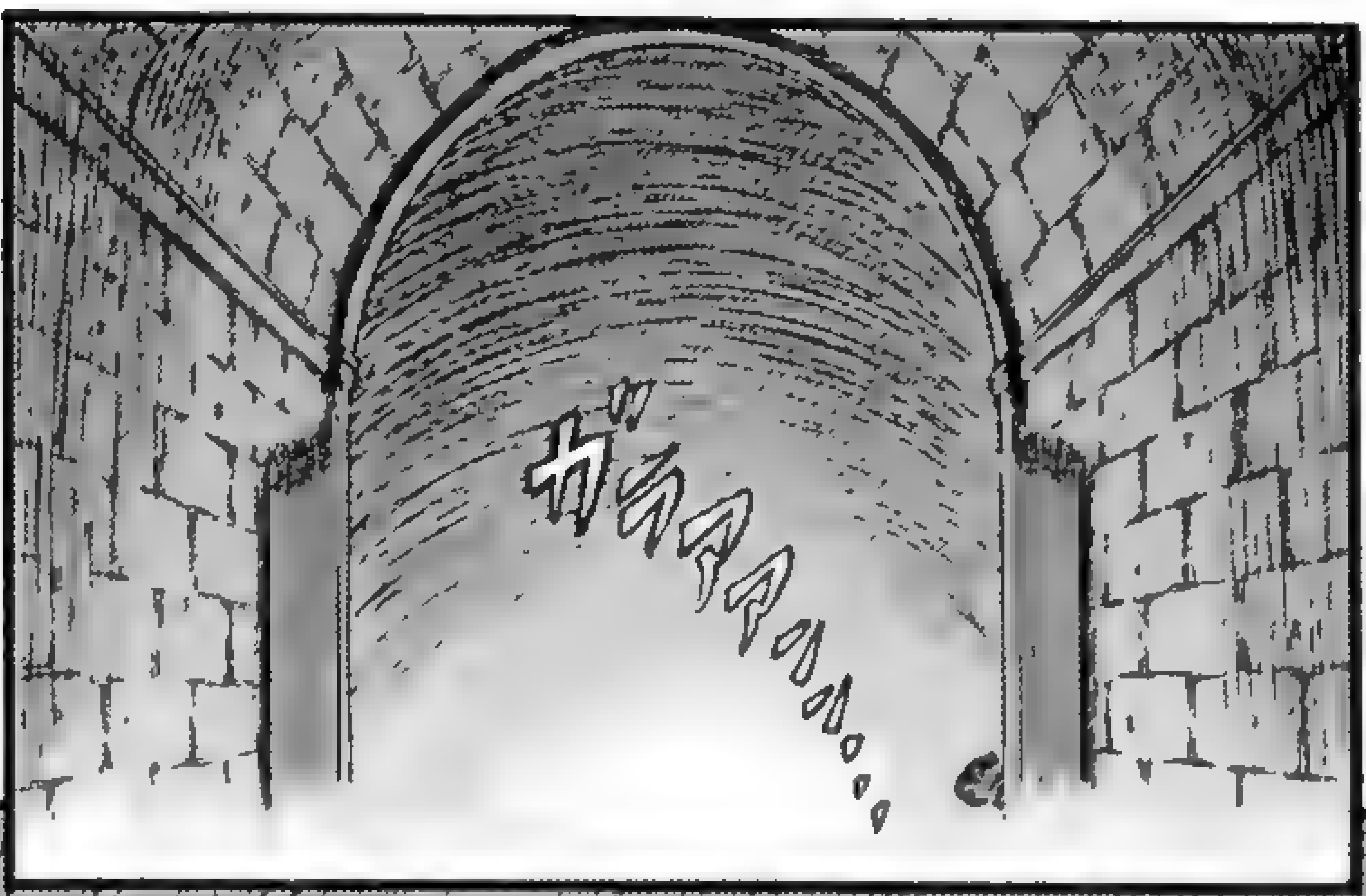
WHOA!
THAT WAS SUDDEN...!!
....
THERE IS NO DOUBT IN MY MIND. THIS IS THE FOG FROM WHEN WE WERE ATTACKED AT THE BEACH CABIN...
Y'MEAN...
...THOSE ARE GONNA SHOW UP AGAIN?!
IN THE MIDDLE OF THIS CITY?!
OH, YUCK.
CRIKEY!
IT IS COMING.
SOMETHING FIERCE AND HOSTILE.
THIS FOG ROLLED IN QUICK.

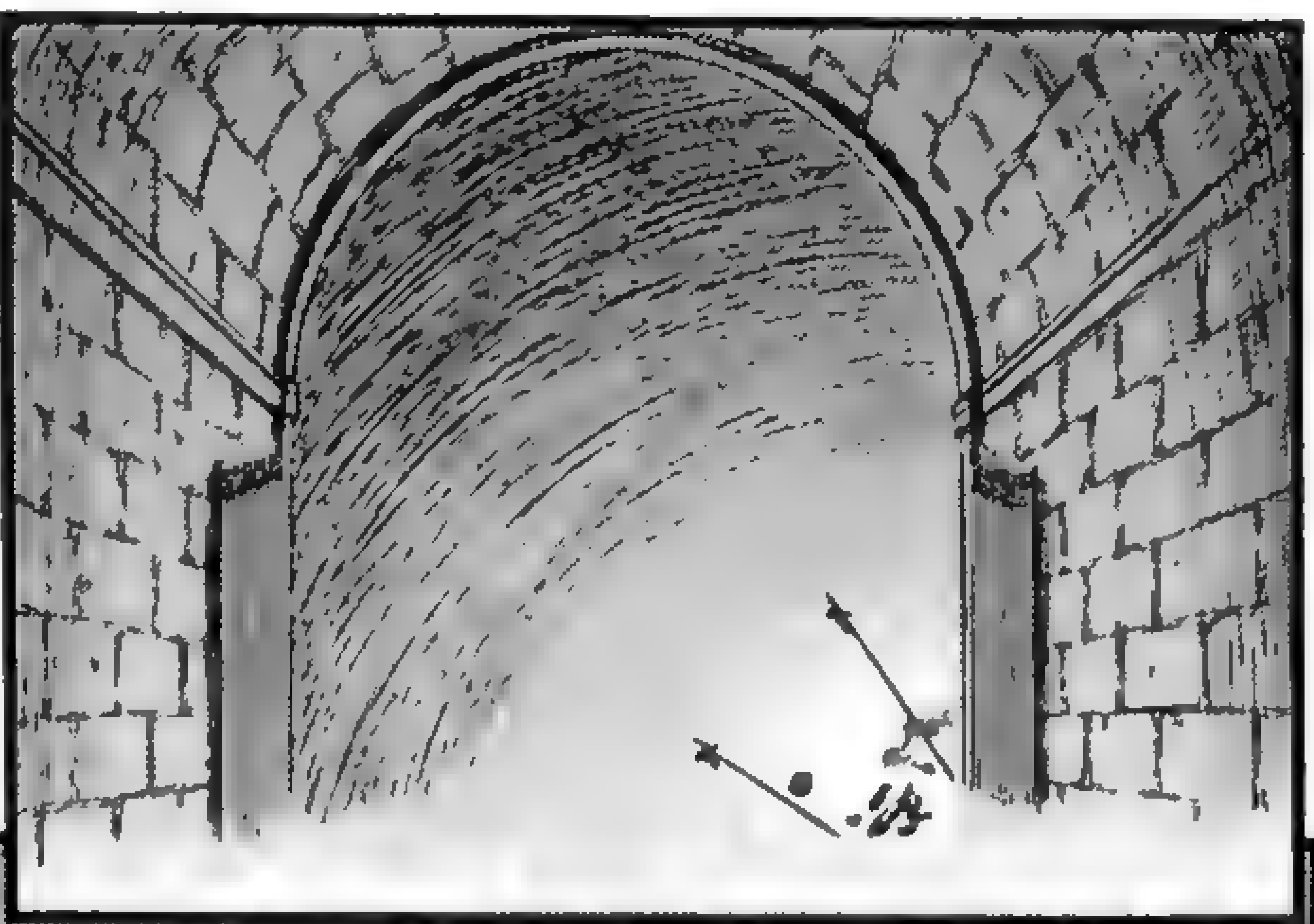
ザ
*ZHF
ザ
*ZHF
ザ
*ZHF
ザ
*ZHF
ザ
*ZHF

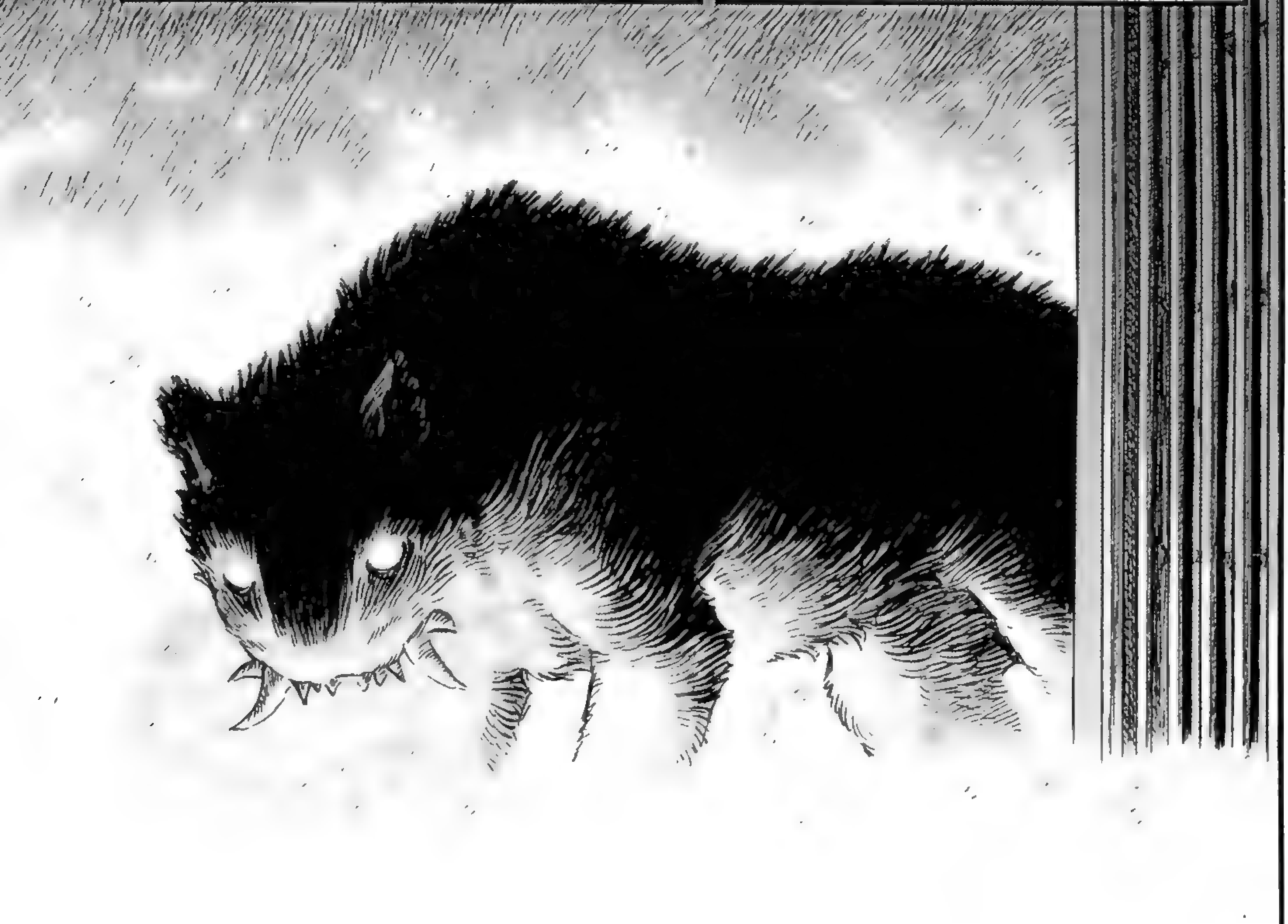


*FX: CHRNK SHROK

*FX. CLANNNG







NOT A CROC.
WH-WHAT THE HELL'S *THAT...?*
ワウゥゥ。ゥ。。。
*FX: HHHHH
グルル
*GRRR
ザッ
*ZHA
バッ
*LUNGE

THAT'S... TOO BIG FOR AN ALLEY CAT.
ALLOY CAT
......
AS WITH THAT TIME...
...I SENSE OMINOUS OD.
IT'S STRANGE.
YOU'D THINK SOMETHING LIKE THAT WOULD COME ATTACK US.
YEAH, IT JUST RAN PAST.
BUT IF SOMETHING LIKE *THAT'S* SLIPPED IN HERE...
...WE'D BETTER HURRY.
HEHEH
THANKS TO THIS FOG, THOUGH, IT'S EASIER FOR *US* TO SLIP IN.
WHAT'S ABOUT TO HAPPEN HERE?

FIGURES THIS'D BE THE TOUGH PART.
CAN'T YOU DO SOMETHIN' WITH MAGIC?
IT WILL TAKE A LITTLE TIME WITH THAT MANY PEOPLE, BUT I WILL SEE WHAT I--
WHAT'S WRONG?
...
WHAT ?
?
HUH ?
THIS WAY.

THOUGHT TRANSFERENCE FROM SERPICO.
HE SAYS HE'S WAITING AT THE REAR ENTRANCE.
....
SERPICO ...?

THIS COLONNADE CHAMBER WAS, AT ONE POINT IN HISTORY, KUSHAN TERRITORY. WHEN THIS LAND WAS WON BACK FROM THEM, IT SEEMS ONE PART OF THEIR PALACE WAS PRESERVED AS A VICTORY MONUMENT.

I APOLOGIZE FOR CALLING YOU OVER HERE.
....
SERPICO.
WE HAVE COME TO SEE FARNE--
!

THAT IS UNFORTUNATE...
...AS I WILL NOT ALLOW IT TO HAPPEN.
GUTS.
THIS IS PRESUMPTUOUS...
...BUT I WILL GRANT YOUR WISH RIGHT HERE AND NOW.

HUHH?
YOU'RE GONNA FIGHT WITH GUTS? HERE?
SERPICO ...?!
ガチャ
*GCHAK
FINE.
バ
*FLAPA

GUTS, NOT YOU TOO...!
WHAT HAS GOTTEN INTO YOU?!
SOMETHING WE CAN'T LET GO OF, I GUESS.
YOU GUYS STAY THERE UNTIL THIS IS SETTLED.
THERE'S NOTHIN' TO WORRY ABOUT.
GRAVE DIGGER OF FEAR
ONE GRAVE GONNA BE ENOUGH?
TWO MEN FIGHTIN' OVER A WOMAN ♡
I MEAN
SCHIERKE, YOU'RE OUTTA THE LOOP HERE!
BUT...

THERE'S NO WAY THEY'LL GO AT IT SERIOUSLY.
THEY'LL STOP JUST SHORT.
*SHMM
ガキッ
*CHOK

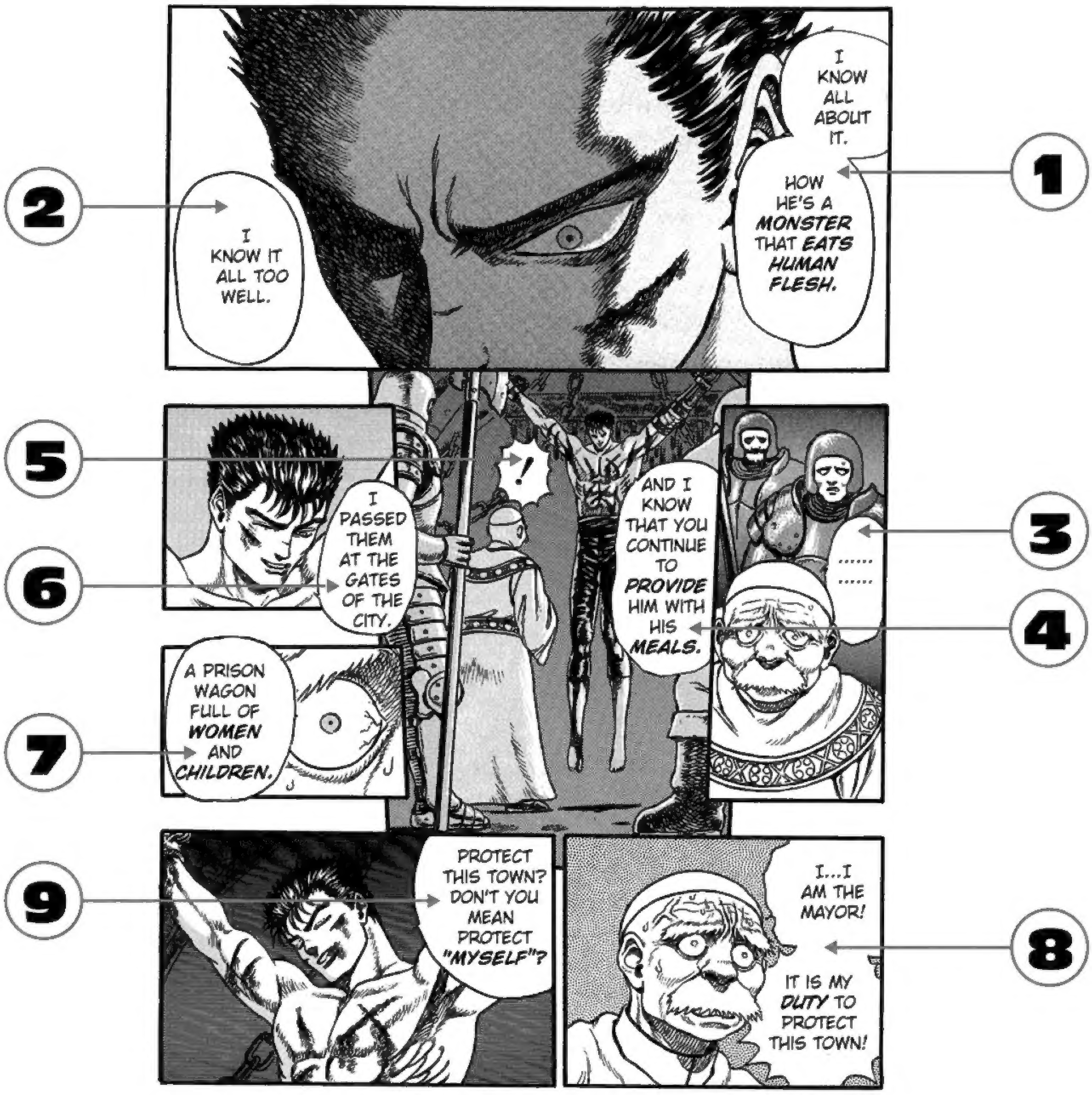
IT MUST BE A BIT CUMBERSOME.
THAT HUGE SWORD.
THIS COLONNADE CHAMBER IS KNOWN AS THE "FOREST OF PILLARS."
THE SPACE BETWEEN THEM IS NARROWER THAN NORMAL, AND THEIR NUMBER IS VAST.
A TACTICIAN, YES.
YA SLY FOX!
SO YOU *LED* US HERE...
PRETTY SMART.
*SWP
SOMETHING TELLS ME I WOULD NOT WIN AGAINST YOU HEAD-ON.
I DO HOPE YOU UNDERSTAND.
*SWP

AS ALWAYS...
...YOU'RE ONE CUNNING BASTARD.

STOP

This is the back of the book!

This manga collection is translated into English but oriented in right-to-left reading format at the creator's request, maintaining the artwork's visual orientation as originally published in Japan. If you've never read manga in this way before, take a look at the diagram below to give yourself an idea of how to go about it. Basically, you'll be starting in the upper right corner and will read each balloon and panel moving right to left. It may take some getting used to, but you should get the hang of it very quickly. Have fun!


1
I KNOW ALL ABOUT IT.
HOW HE'S A MONSTER THAT EATS HUMAN FLESH.
2
I KNOW IT ALL TOO WELL.
3
....
4
AND I KNOW THAT YOU CONTINUE TO PROVIDE HIM WITH HIS MEALS.
5
!
6
I PASSED THEM AT THE GATES OF THE CITY.
7
A PRISON WAGON FULL OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN.
8
I...I AM THE MAYOR!
IT IS MY DUTY TO PROTECT THIS TOWN!
9
PROTECT THIS TOWN? DON'T YOU MEAN PROTECT "MYSELF"?

COMICS & GRAPHIC NOVELS / MANGA / HORROR

BERSERK

KENTARO
MIURA

29

ベルセルク
三浦建太郎

Guts, the Black Swordsman, and his companions have finally broken free of the monster-infested wilderness and arrived at the port city of Vritannis. But the band finds out all too quickly that humans can be just as monstrous as the nightmarish creatures and apostles they battled in the forest. As Schierke and Isidro face off against pirate slavers, Farnese's power-hungry family tries to force her once again under the yoke of their political ambitions. The group's only hope is to find a ship out of the city, but even if they manage to secure a vessel, will everyone be free to leave?

Created by Kentaro Miura, *Berserk* is a howling manga tsunami, an epic graphic-fiction masterpiece that leaves no stone unturned and no blade unbloodied. A boiling blend of action, horror, and humor, *Berserk* is not for the faint of heart, the weak of knee, or the lilied of liver. No Guts, no glory!

This collection is translated into English but oriented in right-to-left reading format, as originally published.

DARK
HORSE
MANGA

FOR READERS 18+
FOR MATURE
READERS